

# I THE INDIAN JOURNAL OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

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*Editor :*  
*Sanjeev Kumar Sharma*

THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF  
INDIAN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION



Dear Friends,

Greetings from Meerut.

Wish you a very happy and prosperous New Year. Thanks for again electing me the Editor of the Indian Journal of Political Science at 53rd All India Conference of Indian Political Science Association at University of Rajasthan, Jaipur on 27-29 Dec. 2006. I am happy that my request to increase the subscription rates of IJPS was considered by the Executive and the General Body of the Association authorized me to decide the issue. I have regularly been pleading that the present subscription structure is inappropriate and financially problematic to the regularity and periodicity of the journal. Therefore, keeping in view the printing cost and postage charges, the subscription rates are hereby being revised w.e.f. 01.01.2007 as follows:-

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With best regards  
Yours Sincerely

  
Sanjeev K. Sharma

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## Editorial Note

*Dear Friends,*

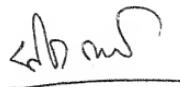
The community of teachers and scholars of Political Science and Public Administration in India has generally been working and striving hard to attain international standards and repute through their well-conceived academic pursuits manifested through seminars, symposia, researchers, publications and journals. Fortunately enough, we have a very good number of scholars throughout the country who have earned international recognition and wide-spread reputation by means of their meticulously prepared and excellently documented writings. Although there appears no updated record of the number of teachers of our discipline in the universities and colleges of our country yet we know for sure that there is a considerably great number of the fraternity spread over all parts of the nation. The contribution of this community with regard to creating an attraction for the subject amongst the students is without any shadow of doubt tremendous. The number of students studying in our discipline in various colleges and different universities, as evident from our personal observation; is also significantly high. The amount of knowledge production in terms of text books, research thesis publications, project works, independent researches, etc is also quite impressive. Of late, some of our senior colleagues have had the opportunity of stepping into top positions of educational administration and thereby being in the capacity of influencing the decision making of the system at large. In this context, the syllabi, the teaching methods, the promotion schemes, the academic environment, the recruitment process, the capacity building programmes and the overall output have witnessed remarkable transformation on all accounts.

The knowledge production sector of our discipline has also witnessed substantial transformation due to their intense interaction with the international community of the discipline through seminars, symposia, workshops, conferences and joint works. This interaction has not only been paving the way towards greater exposure and academic orientations of the researchers world wide but also providing platform to the Indian scholars with their international counterparts. It has facilitated the expansion of the indigenous ideas and concepts through academic pursuits. The results of this interaction ought to have been beneficial for both the sides. But, unfortunately, this did not happen. It is really a matter of great concern for all of us. In this backdrop, great amount of introspection is required. It is now high time that we should start thinking how to reap the benefits of this interaction in real terms. If it is not fructifying, then there is something seriously and fundamentally wrong with the ongoing interaction. The gains and losses must be mutually rewarding. So we must review the gains and losses of international interaction in the domain of Political Science. We must acknowledge the fact that our academic pursuit is devoid of 'Indian' face at international level. Most of our academic efforts and exercises are mere copies or imitation of researches and models enunciated in European and American universities. We are adept in adopting the international (western) concepts, constructs, ideas and models. Whatever they suggest at any

moment of time we join their intellectual chorus so vigorously and sincerely to propagate their intellectual formulations as may be astonishing for the original propounders also. When we are told about human rights, we start exploring the possibilities of ensuring the human rights even in those areas where 'angles fear to tread;' when they tell us about 'environment protection' we launch environment movement; when there is sustainable development, when there is eco-justice, when there is deconstruction, when there is feminism, when there is post-modernism, when there is ethnicity, when there is subaltern studies, when there is multi-culturalism, and when there is any new nomenclature constructed by them, we put in all our mental faculties in that direction without testing their viability, feasibility, and their relevance in Indian setting. We must ponder over them dispassionately and ask ourselves what is the need of these intellectual 'mantras,'? We must also explore the scope for the enforcement of ideas, principles and theories enunciated by the Indian thinkers of ancient period. Western concepts may be traced from the Indian stream of thought as well. So dependence on imported ideas will not do much good for Indian political science. Their utility and relevance must be examined in the right Indian perspective and evaluate their relevance in contemporary world order.

So, I have been regularly urging that we as students of Political Science and Public Administration in India must put in some effort in the direction of proper understanding of our own intellectual past. And we may find it very interesting to learn that our so called orthodox and conventional mythological works contain very sound and profusely analytical perspective of theoretical and practical aspects of socio-political life, institutions, and functional dimensions. Only after a close and intense study of those seminal works, we may be in a position to draw dividing line between the relevant and obsolete portions in present day contexts. That's why Indian texts declare :-

सन्तः परीक्ष्यान्यतरद्भग्नते मूढः परप्रत्ययनेयबुद्धिः ।



(Sanjeev K. Sharma)

1<sup>st</sup> July 2007  
Meerut

## MARKET PRESERVING FEDERALISM : A THEORETICAL HYBRID OF LIBERAL DEMOCRACY AND GLOBAL CAPITALISM

*Biju. B. L*

*Though federalism as a liberal idea theoretically adheres to pluralism, in actual practice it always denies political plurality through imposing liberal democracy, economic plurality through mastering capitalism and cultural pluralism through unifying political and economic ways of life across autonomous units. According to the liberal perspective, federalism ensures co-existence of different geographical units (artificially created for the purpose of governance or created by natural boundaries or based upon ethnic similarities like common language and culture) within a single broad unit of the Nation State. It also bestows the units with autonomy to function differently and separately in quite a number of matters.*

There is a surge in literature on federalism simultaneous to globalization capturing the academic debates on decentralization of political power. Most often, such academic debates are publicized by the liberal intelligentsia as value-free and benevolent. Federalism, a unique form of decentralization of political power assumes great significance in this respect. In fact, the liberals design federalism in such a way that it purports both the penetration of free market regime into the interior parts of the Nation States and the integration of the national/regional / local economies into a single unit viz., the capitalist global economy. This process of federalization contemporaneous to globalization is popularly known as 'Market Preserving Federalism'.<sup>1</sup> Theoretical analysis of the Market Preserving Federalism in relation to the basic tenets of liberal democracy and the dynamics of global capitalism exposes its contradictions and crisis from a critical political economy perspective.

### **Political Decentralization: The Liberalist Dilemma**

The idea and practice of decentralization of power as construed by the liberal intelligentsia are vulnerable to many a critical question. Most important is the inability/aloofness of liberalism to grapple with the political economy of decentralization process. By decentralization majority of the liberals imply the dislocation of the political structure (the State) only, which further shows that they conceive decentralization only in part. Deliberately or accidentally, they hardly advocate decentralization for the deconcentration of economic wealth. This is more so in the contemporary discourses of liberalism in which the State action for economic distribution, which is imperative to accomplish decentralization, is ignored/resisted by and large. It is true that the liberals are wary of the concentration of political power regarding the economic, fiscal and developmental authority at the central government and the current programme of decentralization also visualizes fiscal devolution to the sub-national and local governments. But it constitutes only a part of their key concern – curbing the power of the central political authority. And also it has no genuine concern with the distributive economic policies which is conspicuous by its absence in their

project. Quite often they overlook the disastrous consequences of the pro-capitalist economic and fiscal policies on development. The inadequate understanding of the liberal school about decentralization in fact challenges the theoretical<sup>2</sup> substance of liberalism and exposes the limitation of this philosophy to describe the concept of political power comprehensively. Ironically, the conviction on the market mechanism and its invisible hands to ensure development becomes instrumental for the liberal democratic states to follow the dictates of the market while formulating the economic and fiscal policies at the political level.

It is to our commonsense that left to itself the market economy exacerbates regional and class disparities by discriminating both the regions and the people on the basis of their competence and merit. Since the market fails to ensure a judicious distribution in the economic sphere and the political decentralization deprives the State any effective power to initiate egalitarian policies, the free market regime becomes counter productive to development. Any programme of decentralization could not resolve this embarrassment without addressing the need for a systematic restructuring of the base. The absence of such an effort in the liberal approach to decentralization compels one to doubt the project as a capitalist connivance to encourage the free market at the cost of social justice and equity.

Liberals fail to discern this contradiction mainly because of four reasons. Firstly, in liberalism politics is more associated with the institutionalized power structure (state and government) and is considered as a formal/legal activity. Since politics is simplified as 'the exercise of coercive power by certain institutions or individual rulers', its wider dimensions - the struggle for hegemony between social groups/classes or as an activity par excellence - are totally overlooked. A critical political economy perspective would have been a remedy to this handicap. But the liberal school seldom recognizes the class aspect of politics. It is reflected in their theories of decentralisation as well. Secondly, liberalism is not self critical even though the philosophy may advocate plurality of perspectives. The lack of self criticism is mainly due to certain epistemological weakness of this philosophy. It further prevents the liberals from designing theoretical devices to understand social problems in general, and the issues of decentralisation in particular. Thirdly, the irrational and conceptually inconvincible assumptions of liberalism about power, politics, individual-society relationship, individual self, freedom, equality etc., become another hindrance to undertake a scientific study. Finally, the philosophy is biased towards the dominant class of the world economy viz., the bourgeoisie.<sup>3</sup> Hence, on the contrary to our general belief, the liberal approach to decentralisation is ideological<sup>4</sup> rather than scientific. Academically speaking, since liberalism has no (self critical) theoretical design to study these contradictions, serious researchers have to approach the issue of decentralization from a critical platform. Needless to say, such an approach would dismantle liberalism substantially.

### Liberal Ethos of Federalism

Theoretical understanding of federalism as a model of liberal democratic governance – democracy in the substantive sense of ensuring both qualitative and quantitative improvement in the life of citizens and balanced development of regions – has to begin by focusing on its ideological foundations and practical forms. It may be recalled that federalism, right from its origin in an institutional form in USA, has been a liberal connivance to limit the scope of State activity. Consequently, the federal structure evolved in a manner that it always remained reconciled to the needs of a *laissez faire* State and a free market economy.

Federal ideas and institutions have strengthened since the emergence of liberalism as the guiding spirit of democracy in the West.<sup>5</sup> As such federalism has much to share in common with both economic and political principles of that philosophy. It may be recalled that liberalism conceptualizes State as the facilitator of civil and political freedoms than the dispenser of economic justice to the masses (Vincent; 1992: 32) and a federal State functionally suits this political vision. Since, in federalism, the State power is dispersed among the federating units (a case of divided sovereignty), it is easy to check the power of the State and also to manage conflicts that may arise while arranging territorially distributed power. Besides, the liberal ideology – classical, modern and contemporary – that weighs diversity, plurality and freedom against every kind of political monism, realizes federal government as an 'effective' mechanism of liberal governance.<sup>6</sup> The earlier constitutional experiments in western countries like USA, Switzerland and Canada<sup>7</sup> based on federal principles rightly matched their political and economic life in which the liberal ethics of 'Lockean tradition' reflected the most. Hence, Douglas Verney argues that federations in the West have always been associated with liberalism (Verney; 2003: 27).

This correctly corroborates that federalism is not only a liberal ideology in origin, but also a practical connivance for the exertion of State power with respect to providing maximum individual/entrepreneurial freedom as envisaged in liberal democracies (*Ibid*). Hence, individual freedom vis-à-vis State has been ensured basically in two different forms: Firstly by dividing citizenship – the political meaning of an individual in a democratic State – theoretically into two loyalties, one to the Nation State and the other to the federating unit in which he/she lives. This separation of loyalties substantially makes the individual free from the control of any single collective entity arbitrarily demanding his freedom. Hence, Ronald Watts contends that federalism is a healthy, 'liberating' and positive form of political organization (Watts; 2002:3).<sup>8</sup> Secondly, by dividing sovereignty between federating units and the centre, the freedom of the former is assured in accordance with the liberal principles (Diamond; 1981:49).<sup>9</sup> This has again considerably reduced the scope of the State to intervene collectively and directly in the life of the individual.

In most cases the federal arrangement reduces the scope of the national government to

abuse individual freedom and provides it only the option of non-intervention or indirect intervention through the federating governments. And also, the division of powers provides autonomy to the federating units in a wide array of political authority. They theoretically preserve individual freedom because compared to the distant but collectivist and stronger national government, the federating units are closer to the individual and less powerful (*Ibid*; 50). Hence, they can be easily influenced by the individual citizens. Finally, the conflicting scenario of inter-governmental power relationship between the centre and federating units avoids a large number of incidents of potential right violations due to arbitrary actions by either government. Federalism thus theoretically reduces the scope of arbitrariness and provides adequate breathing space for consensus and compromises whenever these two governments jointly exercise political power. In these and multifarious other ways federalism does justify liberal individualism.<sup>10</sup> This is best illustrated by James Madison, one of the authors of classical federalism thus:

The power surrendered by the people is first divided between two distinct governments and then the portion allotted to each is subdivided among distinct and separate departments. Hence a double security arises to the rights of the people. The different governments will control each other and at the same time, each will be controlled by itself (Hamilton, et. al; 1957: 323).

Not only was the power of the State divided in classical federations, but also effective checks were ensured for sustaining this practice. This is accomplished through a liberal individualistic interpretation of the rights of the people wherein it acts as a check upon the central legislature, where the collective will and popular aspiration seem to reflect. As the state governments also cannot violate individual rights, particularly the right to property, liberal constitutionalism perfectly ensures liberal governance in the federal system. This precaution was taken to avoid all potential dangers of simple majoritarian democracy to elite interests (Lijphart; 1985: 3-4).

And this fear of democracy continued till the publication of Alexis de Tocqueville's masterpiece, *Democracy in America*. But even Toqueville was wary of popular rule because it did not necessarily imply protection of personal freedom.<sup>11</sup> This shows that, like in any other liberal democratic device, in federalism also democracy is construed too narrowly so that it perfectly serves the interest of the dominant classes at both national and regional levels.

Though federalism as a liberal idea theoretically adheres to pluralism, in actual practice it always denies, political plurality through imposing liberal democracy, economic plurality through mustering capitalism and cultural pluralism through unifying political and economic ways of life across autonomous units. According to the liberal perspective, federalism ensures co-existence of different geographical units (artificially created for the purpose of governance or created by natural boundaries or based upon ethnic similarities like common language and culture) within a

single broad unit of the Nation State. It also bestows the units with autonomy to function differently and separately in quite a number of matters. As pluralism saves the Nation State from disintegration, indeed, it became the natural choice of many multicultural developing countries. The political connotation of pluralism, assuming State as an association of associations, correctly matches its federal organization, wherein autonomy and legal equality of federating units have been recognized. In other words, as liberalism conceives pluralism as the best tool for system maintenance, federalism follows suit. As Allan Ball says, the 'belief' that power is more widely distributed may be very important, of course, for the legitimacy of the government and the stability of the system (Ball; 1981: 34). Federalism thus acts as a check against both centripetalism and centrifugalism by providing unity in diversity, thereby ensuring stability to the liberal order – both economic and political.

Another finer point that needs narration is the similarity between liberalism and federalism, in what J. S. Mill calls as majority's rule with the concurrence of the minority.<sup>12</sup> The liberals deriving their inspiration from him, who set out the need for a minority veto to arrest the majority's assertion through the democratic will of the legislature, call for consociationalism<sup>13</sup> in federalism too. They take precautions against majoritarian democracy which upsets liberal individual rights by virtue of the collectivist take over. In their opinion, individualism in federalism is a safety valve against the practice of majoritarian democracy. Arend Lijphart contends that minority veto is an essential link that connects non-majoritarian and consociational theories of democracy and the liberal version of federalism. According to him, though conceptually and empirically, federalism and consociationalism do not coincide, they do overlap to an important extent in rejecting majoritarian democracy (Lijphart; 1985:32) Alexander Hamilton also testifies to this:

All communities divide themselves into the few and the many. The first are the rich and well born, the other, the mass of people. Give all power to the many they will oppress the few. Give all power to the few they will oppress the many. Hence there was a need to give the rich and the well born a distinct, permanent share in the government through which they could check the imprudence of democracy [Morris (ed.); 1969: 152].<sup>14</sup>

Parallel to the above, federalism also provides ideological justification to status quo. As a federation typically comprises of two sets of government, it requires fixed constitutional definition of the relations of power between the State and individual and also between centre and the federating units. It enhances procedural jurisdiction. And a strict adherence to the Constitution, which expounds mainly procedural democracy and formal justice, legitimizes the existing values and political order as unquestionable.

It is also important to note that many of the institutional arrangements of a federal polity – for instance, the powerful second chamber of the federal legislature and equal rights of the

states in representation in it – better preserved the conservative ethos than comparatively progressive liberal ones in classical federations like USA. However, in later period these contending ideologies – conservatism and liberalism – developed a consensus after capitalism gained currency and this is more so in times of globalization.<sup>15</sup> For instance, the neoconservatives and neoliberals, more or less, advocate the same principle of Social Darwinism (Dickens; 2002:23-25). It may also be noted that the progressive content of liberalism tapers off and the philosophy is totally overshadowed by the urge for the maintenance of status quo in the bourgeois democracy and capitalist order. All these are rightly reflected in federal theories also.<sup>16</sup>

Naturally, therefore, federalism came to be hijacked today by neoliberal/neo-conservative economists and Political Scientists, market strategists and their institutions, pioneering capitalist States and their ideological agencies to materialize and purport free market economic philosophy. By implication this means that, in contemporary times attempt is to reconstitute the welfare State into a minimal Nation State with a weak centre at the apex and disempowered regional units below i.e., a market friendly political entity.

Even though the aforesaid analyzes expose the connection between liberalism and federalism in the domain of political ideas, the picture still remains hazy. Therefore, a critical political economy theory is necessary for an understanding of the liberalist connection of federal democratic philosophy, its capitalist economic practices and for explaining the recent efforts at restructuring federalism to suit the exigencies c' a free market regime. It in turn points towards the need for analyzing the economic underpinnings underlying them and establishing the linkage between the two. A discussion on the State vs. Market Debate that went on and still continues in the liberal idea of federal democracies becomes imperative here.

#### **State vs. Market Debate in Federalism**

Historically speaking, the ideological conjuncture between federalism, capitalism and liberal democracy is self evident.<sup>17</sup> The best examples are the first generation federal countries – USA, Switzerland and Canada – which were and are essentially capitalist societies with liberal democracy. Therefore, federalism as a historical conjuncture, at least in the West, advanced with the evolution of capitalism. Currently, the leading models of capitalist system flourish as liberal democracies worldwide. This is not to say that all capitalist countries were/are federal or even that all federal nations were/are capitalist. While in the former category countries with unitary forms of governance are found, in the latter group countries like erstwhile U.S.S.R and the newly emergent nations in the third world remained/remain as examples. However, what is of significance in the case of the latter was the ephemeral nature of their tryst with socialism/welfarism and their eventual acceptance – fully or substantially – of the logic of the free market economy. Thus the State vs. Market Debate which was settled, at least partially, in these

countries in favour of the former is reversed today in favour of the latter during the late 1990s. With these States also falling in line, the debate attained prominence once again. In a sense there is nothing surprising in this as federalism is related to liberalism and liberalism in its turn to market friendliness. This means that the centrality of market is the basic premise of liberalism which has its repercussions for federalism as well, both in theory and practice.

It may be recalled that market economy is synonymous with the capitalist system in which economic activities are carried out by entrepreneurs, financiers, manufacturers and traders in an atmosphere of 'free and fair' competition under market conditions of demand and supply (Sargent; 1969: 36-39 & Saunders; 1998: 9).<sup>18</sup> And it is this entrepreneurial freedom and autonomy of capitalism which is reflected as individual freedom in a liberal democracy. Also the liberal State takes too much vigilance in its institutional, legal and constitutional forms to protect this freedom of entrepreneurship and profit making, either directly or indirectly. Liberal ideology thus shapes its institutional framework (super structures) motivated by the needs of the economic base (structure) i.e., capitalism in liberal democratic States.<sup>19</sup> The free market can effectively exercise its rules only when the majoritarian democratic State do not intervene with anti-rich (minority) policies.

In liberal democracies, therefore, the State provides every help to facilitate capitalism through its meaningful non-interference in market. Here the absence of State's command and control seems to strengthen the market. Mac Pherson rightly remarks:

The job of liberal State was and was seemed to be to provide the conditions for a capitalist society. The essence of both the liberal State and capitalist society is competition between individuals who are free to choose what they would do with their energies and skills (Arblaster; 1998: 37-39).

Contemporary liberalism regards everything including political democracy as irrational, if it stands against the free market.<sup>20</sup> And it is only natural that this market friendliness of liberalism has contaminated federalism as well. However, since liberalism promotes a market friendly State, such a process is very problematic vis-à-vis a federation. Therefore, federation is designed by fixing the authority of the centre and autonomy of the units to suit the market economy. Doing so, the liberals have to portray it as preserving democracy. In the formative stages of American federalism, Madison and Hamilton urged for centralized powers of defence and interstate commerce and also were wary of granting sub-units veto power as they thought that it would render the centre weak and cause tedious delays, continual negotiations and intrigues, and contemptible compromises of 'public good' (Arblaster, op. cit, 37-39).

Since liberals need a State, which ought to be market facilitating and (individual) freedom maximizing, their federal arrangement has also to be set on the principles of securing only the

Lockean rights (life, liberty and property) in the state of nature. This naturally establishes a 'strong' centre, which is bound to function in accordance with capitalism.

It has already been stated that federalism curbs considerably the authority of the Nation State by dividing its sovereignty. But, since political power does not disappear completely, it is a matter of conjuncture that it has been concentrated elsewhere. It actually rests in the hands of the ruling class and in their institution – the market – wherein they already have cumulative economic power. It is also worth noting that federalism which limits the power of the State seldom attempts to do the same thing vis-à-vis the market. Contrariwise, the limitations imposed upon the State only increases the influence of the market to decide the terms and conditions of the economic mechanism and development policies.

Hence, it is not surprising that liberal State, even in its theoretical form does not suggest any freedom or right specific to the poor, but only throw them to the market where the rich calls the shot. It could be argued that left to itself, the 'majoritarian democracy' with a critical will and action could offer certain advantages to the poor, but the liberals' fear of popular rule i.e., imprudent mob rule, forces them to prevent the emergence of such a contingency<sup>21</sup> and, moreover, in a competitive free market regime the concept of equity between individuals and among units has little relevance. In federal systems based on the classical liberal tradition, the central government has a market-facilitating role to promote free trade between regions and has to protect domestic capitalism from foreign competition. All these had been found in the initial phase of US federalism (Elazar; 1987). This facilitating role of the central government varies in accordance with the relative strength and capabilities as well as the needs of capitalism in other federal democracies. Thus, the so called autonomy given to the units is ineffective vis-à-vis the forces of market and this will have a telling impact on the poor.

It is also true that because of the superiority of market over the State in capitalist federal countries, it is the market and not the State that decides the code of conduct of federal governance relating to economic affairs. Their Constitutions are meaningfully silent in this regard. Practicing non-interventionist policies in economic governance, both the Constitution and the State structure are made not only for each other, but together they further laissez faire capitalism. While in those countries the Constitution ensures liberal politics, the principles related to the economy are left completely to the market. The dominance of market upon the State in such federations had been a common feature until the investiture of Keynesian economics that provided a welfare face to the capitalist State. As Keynesian economics became the watchword of liberal democracies of the West, federal governance also for the first time incorporated the sharing of development responsibilities by both the centre and federating units in a cooperative manner.

In the USA, for instance, the New Deal Policy significantly gave many new responsibilities

to the central government, and with this it had to act positively for development giving necessary directions to the units to regulate free capitalism. The newly liberated countries in the developing world also followed suit and many of them initiated a mixed economy in which the government had great role in popular welfare. The positive liberal State thus emerged was not a limited State, given its wider role in developmental affairs of its citizens and control over the market. It was in many ways better than a simple night watchman State remaining merely as a necessary evil for the rich and perennial evil for the poor. Moreover, as it was representative in nature, it was able to maintain a relative autonomy between various classes in the society, at least in theory and that too during the initial period. Therefore, the liberal State transformed its class character at least in appearance, though not drastically in substance.

This shift was necessarily one from the market facilitating 'competitive federalism' to development oriented cooperative federalism based on sharing responsibilities between the central and the state governments.<sup>22</sup> This was a significant change in the liberal tradition of federalism and it also caused a strong cleavage between the pro-market federalists and pro-State political thinkers (positive liberals).<sup>23</sup> However, the welfare feature of the liberal democratic State was short lived. After a relatively short break of fifty years (1930s-1980s), one less than the historical period of its traditional bonhomie with laissez faire capitalism, liberal democracy parted with welfare in all the prominent western capitalist countries, first in USA followed by United Kingdom.

#### **Federalism in the Era of Globalization**

Writers like, Milton Friedman, Keith Joseph et. al. in 1970s, and Hayek in 1940s, criticized the Keynesian State as a paranoia to the market forces as it causes slow growth and recession consequent upon deficit budgeting and inflationary policies. The oil price fluctuations in the 1970s also proved that the command foreign exchange regime ought to go. Besides, the Multi National Corporations (MNCs), which thrived on protective policies of welfare capitalism, also began to assert in the global political economy, which corresponded to the quantum jump in the total volume of international trade by that time. Under the influence of all these factors, the rupture with the past was complete (Keith Faulks; 1999: 74-77).<sup>24</sup>

The initial urge in this new phase of economic practices entirely aimed at rolling back the State from its interventionist role in the economy. This was done through revitalizing the concept of limited government.<sup>25</sup> Here it is worthwhile to remember that liberal democracy at its inception in the late medieval period was emancipatory in nature as it promised liberation from feudalism. But, today a fulsome transition from the welfare State to laissez faire faces its own crises of legitimacy since the State which retreats now is democratic in nature. The protagonists of globalization rightly understand this and, therefore, try to justify the transition by citing economic

exigencies resulting from the 'inefficiency' of the welfare State vis-à-vis the emergent new international political economy. Their argument is, indeed, that the Nation State has become too big for small problems and too small for big problems given the complex demands of the populace and the multiple compulsions from the ever enlarging international political economy. In this formative context, they argue that the retreat of the State from welfarism is inevitable. In a sense, according to the neoliberals this is beneficial to the masses also. Hence, the State restructuring programme of globalization, right from the beginning, has been portrayed to be pro-people and pro-development. However, a critical reading of the arguments renders wrong both the justification for globalization and the supposed benefits it promises for the entire humanity. At the very outset it should be noted that globalization is a natural outcome of the structural contradictions of the capitalist mode of production and is, therefore, part of its survival strategy. As in the earlier epoch the colonial expansion and imperialism were the outcome of the crises of European capitalism (over production and under consumption), globalization today is also a by-product of the structural contradictions of western capitalism. The only difference is that unlike the earlier epoch, the new agenda of imperialism now gets support from the ruling class of the third world countries. The policy makers of these countries, partially misled by the neoliberal bandwagon and partially motivated by the class interest and succumbing to the pressure from the ruling class of the domestic political economy rally behind it in contemporary times.

As the circulation of free market under the aegis of Nation State and subsequent integration of these markets with the global market are the two basic contours of such a programme, an entire restructuring of the political frame is inevitable. This seems to be a 'natural process' as far as its inner dynamics – adoption of privatization of national wealth and liberalization of trade and capital flows – is concerned. However, the real fact is that it is deliberately planned at the initial phase with utmost political calculation, economic management and ideological masquerading. The basic impetus to such a programme in the developing countries is from external sources, for instance, the MNCs, Multilateral Agencies for Aid and Development viz., World Bank and IMF and the developed capitalist States (Group of Eight countries) which have a comparative advantage in the open economic competition at the international level.

Consequent upon the demand for opening the national economies, both the federal and unitary States have to ensure meaningful structural changes. Compared to other forms of State organizations and their governing institutions, the influence of globalization on a federal State and its institutions is unique. The permeation of free market mechanism into a federation has to tackle the multiple level governmental institutions and State structures, which requires a special strategy. Here, each level of government has to be accommodative to the permeation process. Therefore, as a condition precedent to the whole process, the centre undergoes a change in character to become market friendly and, thereafter, it devolves its powers to the units for

pursuing the same. Hence, the neoliberals primarily focus on changing the policies of the centre and compelling it to frame rules making the federating units amenable to free market mechanism. This eventually forces the centre to intervene arbitrarily in the affairs of the states.

The process of globalization combines both inward permeation and outward integration of the market through the different layers of a federal country. Through redefining the relationship between market and State at each level of the federal structure in favour of the former, the purpose of globalization is best served albeit destroying the democratic character of the State in the process.

Moreover, globalization and federalism as interpreted by the neoliberal thinkers have a functional mutuality. It seems meaningful that ideologically both federalism and neoliberalism aim at limiting the State power. Whereas in the traditional capitalist federations the fundamental economic role of the federal government was to facilitate national capitalism through free trade between units, the difference in the globalization process is that, here it acts as the facilitator of global capitalism and try to integrate both national and regional markets with the global one.

This process is highly counter productive for democracy as the apex body – here the centre – initiates the decentralization process. A primary analysis shows that the centre devolves to the units only that power which is essential for the purpose of market facilitation. By the same token it would be difficult for the units to move against the market as the intricacies involved in these conflicting and contradictory features of the devolution and decentralization process would make it futile.

The above-mentioned analysis indicates several anomalies and confusions inherent in the federalization process in the age of globalization. Federal systems, due to their unique institutional features and theoretical lenience towards the liberal view of the State, provide much scope for globalization on many counts. Besides these, the iniquitous political economy provides supportive consensus to this restructuring. For instance, the nationwide strong indigenous capitalist class (emerged partially as a result of the protective economic practices of the State) foresees in globalization a unique opportunity to expand, compete and involve in the global political economy. As a condition precedent to this, it would naturally demand from the State provisions which would facilitate its spread into the interior geographical areas and also sectors hitherto controlled by the government. Slowly, but surely, it strikes a deal with the political/bureaucratic classes – both regional and national. A consensus regarding the role of State at various levels vis-à-vis the global, national, and local market evolves subsequently. The formalization of such a consensus also provides legitimacy to globalization policies and consequent structural changes in the federal set-up.

In the process of initiating a market facilitating federalism and later for sustaining it, each institution and policy having specific statutory role in deciding inter-governmental relations need overhauling.<sup>26</sup> Initiatives in this regard usually begin with changing the macro economic policies in which the central government has a commanding power. It is common that generally structural adjustment loans necessitate stabilization policies which include the formulation and practice of new macro economic principles. Deficit budgeting, fixed monetary management in foreign exchange, Administrative Price Mechanism etc., have to be reversed in accordance with the needs of free market economy. In all these crucial areas of macro economic management, economic advice of the multilateral agencies becomes imperative. In federations the New Economic Policy thus starts from above where the policies of the central government are adjusted for the facilitation of free market economy. In due course, this starts percolating to the federating units in the guise of fiscal compulsions, a situation of financial crisis often created by the centre. Subsequently, the phase of second generation reforms dawns and the states are streamlined further.

The new macro economic policies appear as multiple compulsions upon the federating units, and in turn cause problems to them as they (units) are responsible for maintaining the micro economy. It is well known that neoliberal economic managers attach greater importance to pro-capitalist macro economic indices such as balanced budget, huge foreign exchange reserve, full convertibility on capital and current accounts, low interest rate regime etc., than micro economic performance, all of which are meaningful for structural adjustment in federalism. At the macro economic level, globalization policies promote a supply side economy over the demand side one, which finally hampers social spending. This is especially so in those federal systems where the units are primarily responsible for developmental activities. Eventually the stabilisation policies of the centre freeze the expenditure and income of the states which pushes them towards financial crisis.

Usually coming after stabilization or concomitantly with it, the structural adjustment means a re-modification of policy and readjustment of the institutional framework. Surely this alters the institutional frame of federal governance. The policy change is more telling on those institutions which act as intermediaries between the centre and state governments – for instance agencies which allot central grants, apportion tax revenue and grant loans – as they have to reflect the terms and conditions of the macro economic policies. The criteria for allotment, terms and conditions for its appropriation and the rewards in return for better compliance – all become reasons/compulsions to fall in line. These new criteria together with a drastic reduction in the federal grants in the name of promoting symmetry in development and/or consequent upon the general macro economic policies, cause practical difficulties for the federating units in micro economic management. All these trends further weaken regional political structures against

the market. Since the market manages micro economic affairs in accordance with the free play of demand-supply mechanism, the marginalized humanity find no solace in the States' social security schemes, for the social security mechanism itself will have to be dismantled sooner than later. The emphasis is always to provide concessions to the ruling class at the cost of the poor rather than the other way round, bringing in its wake severe resource crunch. This later becomes the alibi for greater privatization.<sup>27</sup>

Further, one of the fundamentals of the federal idea – autonomy of the units – also collapses in the neoliberal period considerably. At a time when national sovereignty itself is at a discount, the territorial authority and jurisdiction of the units would be conspicuous by their absence. Instead their authority is progressively eroded by the intervention of the omnipotent and constitutionally unfettered international market and the market facilitating national government.

Here, it may be noted that in a federation the central government can pursue globalization policies without the concurrence of the units. Interestingly, neoliberal economists often conceal this point and instead present the changes introduced in the federal relations – fiscal relations in particular – as products of national consensus at best or as demanded by the peripheries at worst. For instance, Wallace. E. Oates says:

In the developing countries, we see widespread interest in fiscal decentralization with the objective of breaking the grip of central planning that in view of many (regions), has failed to bring their nations into a path of self sustaining growth (Oates; 1999:1120).

The argument of Oates is *prima-facie* incorrect as decentralization forms part of the programme of rolling back the State and the authority devolved to the units in fiscal matters is only to facilitate the market in every case, and that too mandatory rather than discretionary. To crown all these, in every country the policies are implemented bypassing democratic (representative) institutions.

Hence, the fiscal devolution is not initiated in response to popular demands or arrived at through a consensus among the states, but most often it has been imposed against their will from above by the centre as part of shedding development responsibilities. It may also be noted that, virtually in this process only the development responsibilities are devolved to the units retaining vast powers of resource mobilization with the centre. All these prove that the neoliberals' propaganda that the changes in federalism in times of globalization would increase the autonomy of the units is dubious.<sup>28</sup>

### Conclusion

The emerging federal set-up, therefore, is full of theoretical contradictions. Also, it poses certain practical constraints to pursue developmental policies due to the deprivation of a democratic

role for the State in accordance with the majoritarian will. On the other hand, every policy is strictly monitored and coordinated and every possibility for an alternative experimentation is thwarted. All these prove that autonomy and plurality are conspicuous by their absence. But at the same time, much is there to argue that the ongoing process is highly centralized and controlled by the market and the market facilitating central government.

To compound the situation, while the protagonists of Market Preserving Federalism meticulously plan their agenda to enhance the role of the market in the economy, the emerging regional disparities and class inequalities are left unaddressed – a by-product of straightjacketed policies adopted by the centre without regard for differential capabilities of the states. This is imperative, since competitive federalism compels all states to strive their best to transform their policies to facilitate the market and convert themselves as an investment destination for capital – both foreign and domestic. The gross revenue obtained from different states is not likely to be shared among other backward states because in competitive federalism distributive justice has little relevance. Moreover, any attempt on the part of the federal government to ensure a just distribution of this revenue generated by the wealthier states or giving any concession or favour to the poorer states may be interpreted as asymmetrical treatment and against the very spirit of competitive federalism. Thus contrary to cooperative federalism, in a competitive federalism the concept of development as a common responsibility hardly exists.<sup>29</sup>

Consequent on all these, the Market Preserving Federalism reflects a unique power relation of the political economy. Theoretically, the emerging federal structure takes the form of an omnipotent, politically uncontrolled and, therefore, undemocratic international market at the top level; Nation States as market facilitators at the intermediary level; and federating units as obedient followers of the market facilitation policies at the bottom. At the apex, since there is no democratic control, the international market sets its own agenda. And at the other two levels, the State vs. Market relation in normal course favours only the market which purports the rich and disempowers the masses in both development and governance.

#### Notes

1. Barry R. Weingast introduced the concept of Market Preserving Federalism which appeared simultaneously with the idea of globalization. The five yardsticks – sub-national autonomy (Do the sub-national governments have primary authority over the local economy?), common market (Does the national government have the authority to police the common market?), hard budget constraints (Do all governments, especially sub-national ones, face hard budget constraints?); and institutionalized authority (Is the allocation of political authority institutionalized?) – he uses to compare different federations better explains his commitment to neoliberalism. For details on Market Preserving Federalism see, Weingast,

- 'The Theory of Comparative Federalism and The Emergence of Economic Liberalization in Mexico, China, and India', <http://www.stanford.edu/~weingast/weingast.comp.fedm.MS0.00.pdf>. Also see, Qian & Weingast,; 1997:83-92; Weingast; 1995: 1-31; and Rui J. P. de Figueiredo, Jr., and B. R. Weingast, 'Self-Enforcing Federalism', <http://www.cfia.harvard.edu/conferences/piep/pie-p11172001/weingast.pdf>.
2. 'Theory' shall be conceived as 'a systematic (and realistic) understanding of a phenomenon by establishing causal connections between different variables which generally leads to the formulation of a framework which is reproducible in different time and space with or without modification.
  3. 'Ideology' as defined in this paper is composed of three parts – 1. A theoretical understanding about a phenomenon or reality; 2. A vision about its future order; and 3. An action programme to change, conserve or retrieve the reality in accordance with the vision. Every social theory is ideological, and therefore is political.
  4. Thomas Hueglin observes that federalism has been evolved as a political practice alongside modern liberalism [Hueglin; 2003:12; Levy, 'Federalism, Liberalism, and the Separation of Loyalties', <http://ptw.uchicago.edu/Levy03.pdf>; Riker; 1964&1987; and Buchanan; 1994:1-9].
  5. John Locke, the father of modern federalism, favoured a federal government in this sense.
  6. Liberalism has focused on constitutional themes since its inception. Liberalism fed upon and virtually identified itself with the constitutional tradition (Vincent; 1992: 48-49).
  7. Different reasons for instance, economic, religious and security are cited for creating federations in the classical period. [Andrea Bosco (ed.); 1991:169-91 & McGarry; 2002]. For an authentic account on how liberal democracy preserves ethnic pluralism, see Choudhary; 2002: 54-78.
  8. Again, Paul. E. Peterson argues that the national government by defending the country against foreign aggression prevents external threats to liberty. The state government by denying power to any single dictator does the same. (Peterson; 1995: 6).
  9. For instance, Martin Diamond foresees following features in federalism – it devolves power to the units and so limits the influence of national government making it less dangerous to liberty; it promotes civic virtue by bringing public affairs within the reach of citizens; it provides the people with political organization through which they can resist encroachment by the national government; and it allows the government to respond flexibly to the local needs. Martin

10. "It has been contended that liberalism is also committed to a minimal State, one limited to the tasks of internal order and external defence and distinguishing between private and public realms". See for details, Vincent; op. cit; 48 & Arblaster; 1984: 85-91.
11. For an informed debate on this point, see Tocqueville; (trans.) George Lawrence; 1969.
12. Thus Mill envisions a tolerant society in liberal countries which follow this principle. But his critics, for instance Herbert Marcuse, attack him and his concept of 'pure' or 'formal' tolerance for, according to them (critics), it has turned into its opposite. Having once played a positive role in the struggle for human emancipation, it has now become an instrument of repression, a means through which those in power dominate whom they rule (Marcuse; 1965: 95-137).
13. Consociational democracy is an idea by which the arbitrary will of the majority is prevented through mechanisms like liberal constitutionalism, individual rights and federal organization of State. Liberals prefer this type of democracy to preserve a capitalist economy. In multicultural societies they use it to resolve ethnic conflicts, and demand regional autonomy. With the advent of neoliberal economic policies, the consociational democracy gained wider acceptance among the liberal intelligentsia.
14. John Adams also says that the rich ought to have an influential barrier in the Constitution against being robbed, plundered and murdered as well as the poor, and this cannot be without an independent Senate (Parrington; 1927:317).
15. For details of the debates between conservatives and liberals on federalism and its final settlement in twentieth century, see Dilger; 2000:98-107 & Lakoff; 1998:435-65.
16. From the progressive era at the end of the nineteenth century to the 'New Deal liberalism' of the 1930s to the 1950s, liberals seeking to regulate the economy and extend social programmes saw in states' rights only a cosy, incestuous relationship between giant corporations and the state governments they overshadowed. Countervailing federal power became the liberal strategy for reform. Conservatives upheld state powers as the best protection against misguided federal bureaucrats and unnecessary regulatory and social welfare legislation. After the political upheavals of the 1960s, however, liberal-conservative differences over federalism have become blurred. Student movements of the 1960s called for local 'participatory democracy', civil rights leaders advocated 'community control', and liberals in many policy areas came to advocate reforms which involved inventive mixtures of federal, state, local, and even private sector initiatives. Conservatives, for their part, while continuing to advocate the dismantling of federal New Deal programmes, found themselves advocating the expansion of federal power in other areas such as the

Communications Decency Act and its attempt to regulate morality in a technologically new era (Smith; 1982: 1-8).

17. Despite its earlier connection with individual anarchism of Proudhon, the USSR's experimentation of it within socialist framework for the sole purpose of imperial unification of neighbouring States, and attempts by developing countries and the welfare capitalist States of western democracies to use it as an agent of development, it has been a firm ally of the liberal family.
18. Saunders defines capitalism as a system in which individuals or combination of individuals compete with each other to accumulate wealth by buying the rights to use land, labour and capital (means of production) in order to produce goods or services with the intention of selling them in the market for profit.
19. Ralph Miliband considers this as the economic function of the capitalist State. (Miliband; 1979: 90).
20. W. H. Riker who belongs to the rational choice school, contends that majoritarian democracy is irrational and market makes more rational choices than the ballot boxes do. He makes a difference between liberalism and populism. See for details, Keith Dowding, 'Can Populism Be Defended? William Riker, Gerry Mickle and Interpretations of Democracy', [http://personallse.ac.uk/DOWDING/Files/Can%20Populism%20Be%20Defended\\_web\\_\(11\\_10\\_04\).pdf](http://personallse.ac.uk/DOWDING/Files/Can%20Populism%20Be%20Defended_web_(11_10_04).pdf); Michael W-ohlgemuth, 'Schumpeterian Political Economy and Downsian Public Choice: Alternative Theories on Democracy: A Review', [http://www.walter-eucken-institut.de/publikationen/02\\_7bw.pdf](http://www.walter-eucken-institut.de/publikationen/02_7bw.pdf); Norman Schofield, 'Constitutions, Voting and Democracy: A Review', <http://schofield.wustl.edu/paper13.pdf>; and Riker; 1986.
21. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 'Federalism', <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/federalism/>. Also see, Elazar; 1987.
22. Co-operative federalism is a system in which both Federal government and the federating units share responsibilities for public welfare. But in a competitive federalism the units and the centre try to maximize private investment and promote efficiency and economy in economic governance. The major features of cooperative federalism are: it is a positive concept; there is an emphasis on shared duties and actions among units; it is need based; there is an emphasis on process than structure; and it manifests the will of the people and therefore, is consonant with participatory democracy. Ideally, in a competitive federalism competition between governments results in the best society, with more freedom and prosperity. There should be multiple competing governments, and people should be

free to choose which government to live under. All these are based on the very principles of freedom of consumer in a market economy (Pant; 1997:134 & Watts: 1968: 12).

23. Federalism implying a limited government in classical liberal tradition was unsuitable to take up welfare measures. The principle of non-interference by the Nation States in the private autonomous spaces of individuals and units (a usual liberal postulate of federalism) was necessarily reflected in the federal systems of capitalist countries. The antagonism of classical liberals to the idea of State as a democratic entity performing an active developmental role in federalism, on the one side, entails the aforesaid connection between liberalism and federalism and, on the other side, reflects the real economic content of classical liberal form of federalism i.e., laissez faire capitalism. In 1930s, the crisis of capitalism was beyond the control of the state governments given the macro economic corrections and international cooperation needed to avert the predicament. This naturally enhanced the role of the central government in federal systems which was hesitantly welcomed by the liberal federalists (Freedon; 2003: 37& Goodwin; 2003: 202-218).
24. Anthony Arblaster puts this phase like this, "It seems doubtlessly that by this time in USA, Australia and Japan, the entire political spectrum further lies to the right" (Arblaster; 1998:107).
25. However, the reinvigoration of classical liberalism and laissez faire capitalism is not easier unless the neoliberals settle the conflicts between the popular demand for welfare and the unpopular requirements of globalized capitalism. This is because unlike the classical period State today is more democratic in form. Even though the 'ghost of communism' liberated by Marx and Engels, seemed to be evaporating slightly, and even in the 1980s, Soviet communism was only a minor threat to the reviving capitalist hegemony, the neoliberals who tried to assert in the policy making institutions related to the global and national economic governance found their formidable challenge in the democratized popular State with a welfare responsibility (a creation of Keynesian economics and positive liberalism) functioning on the principles of majoritarian democracy. In fact, in the post cold war period the trend is that much evident that the democratic governance has become more market friendly. The effort is to theorize it on classical liberal lines and free it from its developmental functions through de-democratization and de-politicization.
26. Therefore, the neoliberals advocate maximization of free market and minimization of popular State.
27. The neoliberal policies which started in US during the Presidency of Ronald Reagan initiated steps to transform cooperative federalism into competitive and market preserving

- one. He sought to redefine and restructure the responsibilities of governments in the federal system while significantly lowering the overall commitment of federal government to providing aid to the states and local governments. For instance he remarks: "We are not cutting the budget for the sake of sounder financial management. This is only a first step toward returning power to the states and local governments" (Cole & Tacbel; 1986: 5).
28. There are contradictory opinions about whether the role of the central government increases or decreases in the distribution of resources between units in a Market Preserving Federalism. For example, Bagchi argues that the redistributive role of centre assumes greater urgency in federations like India where regional disparities tend to accentuate as the economy gets market oriented. On the other hand, Reetha Tremblay contends that the central government which has to favour free market mechanism would not perform the redistributive functions (Bagchi; 2000: 3024 & Tremblay; 2003: 339).

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## STATE ADMINISTRATION IN INDIA : DECLINING TRENDS

K. K. Puri

*Besides politics of populism, terrorism, inter-state disputes, unprincipled alliances to form coalitions etc. are other declining trends which require immediate attention. If steps are not taken to solve these problems and are allowed to continue, the state administration will not be able to function effectively and there may prevail chaos. On the constitutional side by appointing non-partisan persons as governors the prestige of this office can be restored. The politicization of bureaucracy should be checked and stringent measures should be taken to contain corruption and maintain law and order.*

State administration is a subject of great interest and importance especially in a federal country like India having a number of federating units.<sup>1</sup> States being responsible for running administration and execution of development programmes, the efficiency and effectiveness of the administration of the entire country depends upon the vigour and competence of state administration. Though the states vary considerably in terms of size, population, resources, social and cultural milieu but due to the common administrative set up, during the last fifty-nine years some such developments have erupted which have constitutional and administrative bearing on state administration. As it is not possible to elaborate all these developments in this paper, an effort has been made to highlight a few areas of great concern relating to state administration.

The first trend in State Administration having deleterious effect on its functioning is the politicization of the office of the Governor. The appointment of Governor has become purely a political affair. In the beginning efforts were made to appoint people with high profile as governors but with the passage of time as high profile statesmen became a rare species, the party in power in the centre started accommodating rejected political leaders on gubernatorial assignments. The views expressed by Setalvad Study Team of Indian Administrative Reforms Commission, that "many of those" who have held office of the governor since independence "have fallen short" of the requisite standard, due largely to the "the lowly place given to this office", which had come to be treated as a sinecure for mediocrities or as a consolation prize for "burnt out politicians",<sup>2</sup> hold true even today. Rather there is further deterioration as appointments of governors are swayed by party considerations, no matter whichever political party or coalition is in power at the centre. Since the centre has also the power to remove the governor person appointed on partisan basis, "for the fear of losing his office, or of not getting another state on the expiry of his current term" may heed to the promptings of the union more carefully and diligently than what is offered to him under Article 163 of Constitution. It is, therefore, reasonable to hold that the Governor is more an agent of the union than the head of the state over whose destiny he presides.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the usage of consulting is adopted

keeping in view the convenience of the central government. The declaration by the then Union Home Minister Mr. Y.B. Chavan in Lok Sabha on 17th Nov. 1967 that Chief Minister of a state, "has no right to veto the appointment of the Governor of his state," is a testimony to the fact that the party in power at the centre generally give priority to political considerations and ignore constitutional conventions while making appointment of governors. Under such circumstances the governor acts more as an agent of the union or the party in power in the centre and the latter uses him as its representative to control state administration. His position and prestige as head of state is undermined.

The practice of change of governors with the change of government or party at the centre is not only against the spirit of the constitution but also has adverse effect on their position. This affects the concept of neutrality of governors and makes them partisan in character. The way the UPA government in order to accommodate its own persons asked the Governors of about nine states to submit their resignations has far reaching political bearing on the position of the institution of governorship. Through this attempt the UPA government has played havoc with the important office of the governor and the position of the governor as head of the state has greatly been affected.

The use of discretionary powers in party interest is also disgusting. The governor is empowered to act in his discretion on various occasions viz., selecting the Chief Minister before the formation of ministry, dismissal of a ministry, dissolution of state legislative assembly, seeking information from the Chief Minister relating to legislative and administrative matters etc. Of all these use of discretion, when no single party or alliance (formed before and after the election) enjoys majority in the legislative assembly and dissolution of state legislative assembly are matters of great concern. Often this power is used keeping in view the political considerations. The misuse of power by the governors of Goa, Jharkhand and Bihar are eye openers as to how the governors of these states misused their discretion to please their masters in the centre. No doubt these are harsh cases of constitutional impropriety. Similar cases or instances also took place in the past. In May 1982 in Haryana after the Assembly Election, when no single political party could gain majority in the legislative assembly, the then Governor, Mr. G.D. Tapasey on the one hand asked Sh. Devi Lal, leader of the Lok Dal to present his supporters before him to prove his majority within two-days and on the other hand he appointed Sh. Bhajan Lal, Leader of the Indian National Congress as Chief Minister on the same day. Such happenings are really a matter of great concern and effect the state administration adversely.

Under these circumstances great care should be taken in the selection of persons for the office of the governor. Governors should not be politicians who have become unpopular and unacceptable. The appointment of Governor should not be used as a means of rewarding persons who have served the party in the past. The persons appointed should be those with wide experience of public affairs and not identified with a particular party or group. Their term

should not be extended nor their appointment be repeated from one state to another. Only by the observance of high standards, the office so pivotal in centre-state relations under the constitution can serve its constitutional purpose. Governors with high profile will use their discretion to a great extent diligently without any political bias and partisan interests.

## II

Non-cordial interaction between the Governor and Chief Minister is another area of concern of state administration. Till 1967 as there was hardly any non-congress government in the states, there was no such controversy. During this period highly competent statesmen like Sarojini Naidu, K.M. Munshi, Sri Prakash, Mrs. Vijay Laxmi Pandit etc. acted as governors and high profile leaders like Rajagopalachari, Morarji Desai, G.B. Pant, B.C. Roy etc. worked as Chief Ministers who neither liked to be controversial nor liked their counterparts to do anything to hamper their mutual relations. It was only during the post 1967 era that political homogeneity between the governors and Chief Ministers gave way to political heterogeneity and the atmosphere became tense and there started conflict and acrimony between some of the Governors and Chief Ministers. Over ambitious and self-aggrandizing Chief Ministers started taking it as a matter of pride is not obeying the basic courtesies and regarding the governors as constitutional figures without any power and privilege. In Haryana there have been several instances when relations between the Chief Ministers and the Governor were not cordial rather become controversial. The Chief Ministers like Devi Lal, Om Prakash Chautala, in order to show their political superiority tried to dominate over their respective governors. Some Chief Ministers even went to the extent of demanding abolition of the office of the Governor. Such confronting situation lowers the prestige of both the offices and affect the general administration of the state.

## III

Another trend in state administration is decline of bureaucracy. Bureaucracy is an indispensable part of administration. Some regard administration as an act of bureaucracy. Bureaucracy is known for is impartiality, neutrality, anonymity and competence. The concept of neutrality and impartiality worked for about two decades in the beginning after independence but thereafter it came under great strain. The assumptions on which this model worked are not entirely valid today. In the present set up, both in centre and states, bureaucracy is no more impartial and non-committed. The impartiality, integrity and dedication of civil services have been impinged<sup>4</sup> and involvement of bureaucracy has been politicized. It is neither neutral nor anonymous and the classical theory of civil service neutrality seems to have been forgotten.<sup>5</sup> Politicized bureaucracy is involved consciously or unconsciously, implicitly or explicitly in the stream of politics or party in opposition. The nexus between bureaucrats and politicians has jeopardized the impartial trait of bureaucrats and it has lost its neutral and anonymous characters. There is also a growing inclination among civil servants to develop unhealthy loyalties around individual ministers with a view to secure suitable placement or advancement

in their career or obtaining lucrative employment after retirement.<sup>6</sup>

Thus it can be said that bureaucracy at the state level is by and large politicized. There is growing empirical evidence to support the view that neither civil servants strictly adhere to the principle of neutrality nor are the politicians intent in maintaining it. In democracy where there is constant interplay of various pulls and pressures, bureaucracy cannot develop complete immunity from the social and political forces, however, parochial they might be.<sup>7</sup>

The decline of bureaucracy has also been aggravated due to supersession in civil services. Respect for seniority in age and position has been a part of Indian ethos from time immemorial.<sup>8</sup> It was considered as the most objective basis for promotion. But in the present set up this principle has been often eroded both at the centre and the states. In the name of meritocracy senior officers are more often superseded. There are several cases of suppression at the central level such as when Krishana Swamy, P.K. Kaul, T.N. Seshan were appointed as Cabinet Secretaries and recently Shivshankar Menon has been appointed as Foreign Secretary by ignoring a large number of senior officers. But these are said to be exceptions to the general rule of seniority where merit has been given priority. On the other hand, in the states such cases are innumerable. Infact, suppression in civil services is tremendous. Hardly, there is any state where seniority has not be disregarded and in the name of merit personal loyalty and allegiance are rewarded. Practically, in all the states with the change of government a chain of transfers and appointments starts and this process scales down from higher to lower levels of administrative hierarchy. Generally, while making the appointments of Chief Secretary and other higher officers of administration, seniority is ignored and in the name of merit favours are showered on immeritable incumbents. Political considerations in appointments, promotions and other service matters in disturbing scale is a matter of great concern. But this does not mean that merit should be altogether ignored. It has its own merit. As seniority is important and cannot be dismissed as irrelevant, there is a need to have a proper and judicious balance between seniority and merit. The politicians should not take shelter behind merit in order to accommodate their favoured civil servants. Some objective measures should be laid down to decide merit and seniority should be sparingly over-ruled. The appointment of the Chief Secretary and other high ups should be made out of a panel of three senior officers as the Hon'ble Supreme Court has directed in the case of selection of Directors-General of Police of the states.<sup>9</sup> The suggestion of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to get a comprehensive law enacted to bring reform in civil services is also welcomed as it proposes to set up committee of peers, enjoying credibility to make recommendations for superior appointments i.e. Secretaries and heads of para-military forces and intelligence agencies at the centre and Chief Secretaries and Directors General of Police in states.<sup>10</sup>

Frequent transfers is another matter of great anxiety which effects the morale of public services and the functioning of state administration. Transfers at the top are the most effective method of impious politicians in power to deal with inconvenient officers and to replace them

with their own supporters in bureaucracy. It is generally seen at the state level, that whenever there is change of government, there is a change in bureaucratic hierarchy too. The officer at the higher level are invariably transferred and while doing this, the requirement and efficiency of administration is generally given no consideration. In several states the average tenure of a District Magistrate or Deputy Commissioner, Superintendent of Police and other higher officers is rarely more than a few months. The frequent transfers not only demoralize the officers but also brings instability in administration which is detrimental for the security and welfare of the people. Here too, it is required that officers should not be disturbed before a fixed term in normal circumstances.

#### IV

Another area of concern confronted by state administration is corruption. Although the incidence of corruption in public life is a world-wide phenomenon, but in recent years it has assumed frightening proportions in India.<sup>11</sup> Since every aspect of national life is tainted with corruption state administration cannot be an exception. Infact, our saddest failure is the inordinate increase in spread of corruption in all spheres of life. Corruption is rampant in public life and honesty has become a rare commodity. There is a plethora of factors encouraging corruption and one is at his wits to decide which factor is more important than the other. Social, economic and political factors have added to this malady. The nexus of civil servants with power brokers and use of questionable means to acquire more has added to this menace. The lust for power and craze for higher status have further added to the gravity of the situation. The disproportionate wealth possessed by bureaucrats and politicians speaks volume about corruption going into the roots of our administration. Some people go to the extent to remark that corruption has been institutionalized. Some believe that corruption at the state level is more as compared to the centre since all the development activities are performed at state level. Several committees and commissions have been appointed and efforts made to contain corruption and bring the corrupt officials and politicians to book but the expected results are not coming. As corruption has not been combated in any way, people doubt the integrity of the government in eradicating corruption. Some opine that while government stands against corruption it does not believe in weeding out corrupt officials as there has not been any concerted, coordinated, effective and continuous fight to prevent corruption or prosecute and punish the corrupt.<sup>12</sup> Our delaying and cumbersome judicial process and procedure has further added to the gravity of the situation. To contain this menace it would be better to make the institution of lokayukta effective with wide ranging powers. The government should accept the recommendations of the civil service reform committee head by Sh. P.L. Hota to amend Article 311 to enable the President and the Governors to dismiss or remove public servants summarily in the corrupt practices or having assets disproportionate to known sources of income.

## V

Deterioration of law and order is another matter of great concern. Daily we read news of rape, kidnapping, theft, robbery and other social and economic offences. Terrorism, communalism, smuggling etc. have further added fuel to the fire. So far as traditional crimes are concerned the urban areas have been special targets of criminal activity and have contributed in no small measures to general sense of insecurity in the public. Like other states there are some areas in Punjab and Haryana where crimes are rampant and life of common man is always in danger. The common man looks to the police to provide the requisite element of protection to him from the aggressive onslaughts of anti-social elements and also successful apprehension and punishment of the criminals when serious offences occur.<sup>13</sup> But due to political interference and criminalization of politics the law enforcing agencies sometimes become ineffective to combat crime with unflinching determination and force. The psychosis of fear has created an increasing lack of confidence in the law enforcement agency and this has been aggravated by the media whose investigative journalism has brought to the fore the lapses in organizational systems, the sense of dedication of the personnel entrusted with the task and the general incapacity to prevent and control crime.<sup>14</sup>

## VI

Of late political parties in India have been taking recourse to the politics of vendetta. This alarming practice has become more common at the state level. A political party on coming into power in a state tries to pursue the political of vendetta against its predecessor ruling political party. As a result the new state government orders enquiries against the former ministers and in some cases even bureaucrats, allegedly considered to be close to the outgoing political party, are made targets out of vendetta. Moreover, all this is done in a personalized manner. Sometimes, even some former ministers are got arrested on alleged charges of corruption or misuse of powers etc. Reversing decisions of the predecessor governments has become a routine for successor governments. In most of the cases such steps are taken just to malign the image of the political party earlier in power and to take political mileage out of it. All this amounts to political vindictiveness. As a consequence of it leaders of the victim political party issue public warning to the ruling political party and even to bureaucrats that when returned to power will pursue cases against them and avenge the harassment and humiliation its members have to undergo at the hands of ruling party. This is a cause for concern as the party in power instead of devoting its total energies to the task of development of the state indulges in avoidable political conflicts which cause irreparable damage to the state administration. Moreover, nothing worthwhile comes out of it as after sometime the dust settles down causing a severe setback to the system as a whole. It leads not only to the politicalisation of bureaucracy but also lowers their morale. We have been witness to such a practice in the states of Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh etc.

in the recent past. Such practices of political vendetta should be avoided to safeguard the administrative system from degenerated politicisation.

## VII

By and large the appointment of Chief Minister has also become another area of great concern in the working of state administration. According to the constitution, though the Governor of the state is expected to appoint a person as Chief Minister, who commands majority in the State Legislative Assembly. But the practice is contrary to the fact as in majority of the cases the Chief Ministers are imposed by the central leadership of the party having majority in the State Legislative Assembly. This practice has assumed a matter of great concern as in most of the cases the Legislative Assembly group of the majority party in state legislative assembly leave it to the central leadership of the party as to who would be their leader as Chief Minister. Such a tendency is undemocratic and against the spirit of the constitution for it usurps the right of the members of the state legislative assembly to elect their own leader. It leads to centralization of power in the hands of the party high command and is a practice not only undemocratic but also against the norms of popular rule. This also leads to confrontation in the party as sometimes a leader is imposed by the central leadership contrary to the wishes of the member of the State Legislative Assembly. Moreover, the Chief Minister appointed by the party high command oftenly becomes a stooge in the hands of the party high command and loses his autonomy to take actions and make decisions independently. On number of occasions such appointments lead to non-cordial relations between the Chief Minister and their aspirants for this post in the party. This further results in the emergence of dissatisfaction and factionalism among the members of the ruling party in the State Legislature. All such developments lead to instability and incoherence in state administration which in some cases lead to chaos resulting into disintegration in the party. Therefore, keeping in view the spirit of democracy and Indian constitution, the practice of imposing Chief Ministers by the party high command should be checked so that the members of the State Legislature may be able to express their choice and elect the leader of their own liking. This system will make democracy strong and provide an opportunity to the State leaders to act independently in making their decisions for running the state administration without any outside control and interference.

Besides politics of populism, terrorism, inter-state disputes, unprincipled alliances to form coalitions etc. are other declining trends which require immediate attention. If steps are not taken to solve these problems and are allowed to continue, the state administration will not be able to function effectively and there may prevail chaos. On the constitutional side by appointing non-partisan persons as governors the prestige of this office can be restored. The politicization of bureaucracy should be checked and stringent measures should be taken to contain corruption and maintain law and order.

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## PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS AND PARALLEL BODIES IN ANDHRA PRADESH : A MODEL FOR SYNERGY

**Gopinath Reddy**

*Decentralization is being actively considered by the Government of Andhra Pradesh by interfacing between the PRIs and CBOs. The various CBOs that the government has created have resulted in spurring of many parallel structures, thus weakening the panchayats. The multiplicity of organizations has created confusion and has also resulted in conflicts. The interface has become an important part of the GoAPs agenda in order to help make the numerous CBOs become more effective, sustainable and to strengthen the PRIs. A word of caution here is to accept that the interlinkages would have limited role and affect in the process of decentralization and good governance unless definitive measures are taken up by the Government to devolve functions, funds and functionaries to the PRIs, ensuring decentralized planning and convergence. Empowering the PRIs would necessitate the higher authorities to disempower themselves. Devolution of power and authority from the State Government to the three-tiered PRIs would create space and opportunity to ensure closer measures of accountability.*

### **Introduction**

Essentially there are two schools of thought prevalent today that put forward arguments for and against panchayats and parallel bodies. Those on the side of Panchayats argue that benefits from user committees managed natural resource projects such as watershed and forests are not sustainable in the long run. After the source of funds from the project dries up, committees are disbanded or abandoned and the livelihood base of the poor remain marginally improved at all. Perhaps in some cases they create some sustainable social capital by raising awareness amongst the poor.

It is argued that multiplicity of Committees is a means of getting more benefits from the government. The bureaucracy too favours these committees as it is able to have a greater say in the implementation of the programmes through these committees. Committees also create a broader leadership base and provide an opportunity for more people to be involved in decision making through membership (Mid-Term Appraisal of the Ninth Plan, 1999; Reddy, 2003).

The present approach through user committees raises several questions about the links that exist and should exist between the committees and the PRIs. Reasons are many to suppose that this would ensure the sustainability of development programmes.

Firstly, PRIs are responsible for development planning for the whole gram Panchayat and would be the natural apex body for linking several development programmes into their objectives. Secondly they are democratically elected and so reflect local needs and priorities. Third critical factor is that it will be more cost effective for PRIs to be the apex linking body one already so established in this function.

### **Organic Linkages to be established between PRIs and Various CBOs**

It is increasingly felt that different tiers of the PRIs and the various CBOs (Community

Based Organisations) need to be linked institutionally within the existing institutional framework without creating new structures. Further it is felt that PRIs should form the overarching body to provide an integrating framework for better and effective management of practices of all the service delivery mechanisms.

At present, the linkages between democratic and participatory institutions are rather formal in nature. PRI bodies' representation is mandatory in all the participatory institutions though there are no functional linkages between them.

#### Strategy / Framework for synergy

The argument was always on how to bring the WC (Watershed Committees) under the purview of PRIs. The guidelines failed to take into account some of the new initiatives followed by NGOs in the recent years. For instance, in Karnataka PRIs implement WDP with the help of sub-committees, while an NGO in Andhra Pradesh namely Rural Development Trust (RDT) introduced the village development council (VDC) to oversee the smooth implementation of Watershed Development Programme (Sivanna and Reddy, 2005). While in the case of Karnataka, the sub-committees are formal institutional entities under the PR system while in AP the VDCs are informal arrangements by an NGO. Both are recognized by the village PRI and function in a similar way though sub-committees are monitored by the village PRI and PRI members are part of the VDC.

According to a study which looked into legal aspects of PRIs involvement in NRM in the three Indian States namely Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan states mentions that the existing legal framework provides the requisite room for interrelationship of the Panchayats with the user groups. The advantages of the user groups as smaller and specialized entities can be explored within the Panchayat Raj framework by the mechanism of committees. However, the efficacy of the Panchayat Raj institutions and the associated user-groups can be assessed with relation to their conduciveness in realization of the rights at the local level. This is particularly important when widespread emphasis is being attached to the rights of the local people in the discourse of participatory natural resource management, (Upadhyaya, 2005).

Decentralization is being actively considered by the Government of Andhra Pradesh by interfacing between the PRIs and CBOs. The various CBOs that the government has created have resulted in sprouting of many parallel structures, thus weakening the panchayats. The multiplicity of organizations has created confusion and has also resulted in conflict/s. The interface has become an important part of the GoAPs agenda in order to help make the numerous CBOs become more effective, sustainable and to strengthen the PRIs. A word of caution here is to accept that the interlinkages would have limited role and affect in the process of decentralization and good governance unless definitive measures are taken up by the Government to devolve functions, funds and functionaries to the PRIs, ensuring

decentralized planning and convergence. Empowering the PRIs would necessitate the higher authorities to disempower themselves. Devolution of power and authority from the State Government to the three-tiered PRIs would create space and opportunity to ensure closer measures of accountability.

Interface between the PRIs and the CBOs would usher in better mechanisms of accountability. Linkages are necessary to sustain and strengthen the CBOs and make them accountable to "all" the stakeholders at the Gram Sabha. The linkages already created and established by the various Acts and other mechanisms have helped in creating only a token representation to the PRI members. The non-voting powers bestowed on the ward members and the Sarpanches has diluted their presence and participation. Also, the Gram Sabha's are used, if at all, for beneficiary selection. Gram Sabha should become an important forum in micro-planning where the different stakeholders meet to plan for the resources that are available to achieve convergence. Convergence cannot take place through a government order, (Sitaram, 2002).

**Institutional and Functional Linkages :**

The AP PRI act provides for seven Standing Committees at the Zilla Parishad and functional committees at Gram Panchayat. The Standing Committees have been formed and the functional committees are being rejuvenated now. The rules of the Act specify the functional Committees of agriculture, public health and sanitation and communication are a must. With the permission of the Commissioner, more committees can be constituted. In order to strengthen the local bodies, the GoAP passed a GO (Ms. No. 25) on 21st February 2002, which specifies for the formation of the following committees at GP: (1) Agriculture, (2) Environment Conservation, Public Health and Sanitation (3) Water Conservation and Water Supply (4) Education (5) Poverty alleviation and (6) Family Welfare. The GO does not specify the functions of each committee. The functions of some of the committees of Agriculture, Water Supply, and Public Health are specified in the Rules of the PRI Act.

In order to build the present design of the interface, the following committees are suggested with slight modifications to the GO.

1. Agriculture and allied activities.
2. Education.
3. Poverty Alleviation.
4. (Family) Women and Child Welfare.
5. Environmental Conservation, Water Conservation and Water Supply.
6. Public Health and Sanitation.
7. Planning and Finance.

The CBOs, depending on their mandates, should be linked to the different functional committees. It is to consider those groups with specific roles for eg Mothers Committee which works for the welfare of women and child to be linked to the Women and Child Welfare Functional Committee, those with the mandate of looking into natural resources like the Watersheds, etc should get interfaced into the functional committee dealing with Environmental Conservation and so on. The objective of all the groups and the PRIs is to tackle different dimensions of poverty. The interface would build a two way accountability mechanism, thereby contributing to the mechanisms of effective linking especially when the CBOs are formed at the Gram Sabhas.

1. Agriculture and allied activities
2. Education - School Education Committees
3. Poverty Alleviation - District Poverty Initiatives Programme SHGs
4. (Family) Women and Child Welfare – DWACRA, Mothers Committee
5. Environmental Conservation, Water Conservation and Water Supply – Watershed Committee.
6. Public Health and Sanitation

#### **The Process of Inter Linkage :**

**CBO Representation :** It is the practice in each of the CBO to choose a chairperson by a process of selection/election at the grassroots (Habitation, Village, School). From among the chairpersons, representatives are to be elected who would be included in the corresponding functional committees. The Chairpersons of the representative committees, the ward members of the GP and the Sarpanch should participate in the process of election, which would be conducted by way of showing hands or by secret balloting.

#### **The CBOs and the Mandal Parishad (Middle Tier)**

#### **Institutional and Functional Linkages :**

As of now, there are no Standing or Functional Committees at the Mandal. It is necessary to create committees at the MP on lines more or less similar to the ones prescribed at the ZP.

1. Standing Committee for Planning, Finance and Works.
2. Rural Development.

- 3. Agriculture.
- 4. Women and Social welfare.
- 5. Education and Medical Services.

**Formation of the Committees at the Mandal :**

- \* Not less than three and not more than five MPTCs (Mandal Parishad Territorial Constituencies) to form one committee.
- \* One member cannot be a member of more than three committees.
- \* The MPTCs to hold office for a period of five years or for so long as they continue to be members.

**The CBOs and the Zilla Parishad**

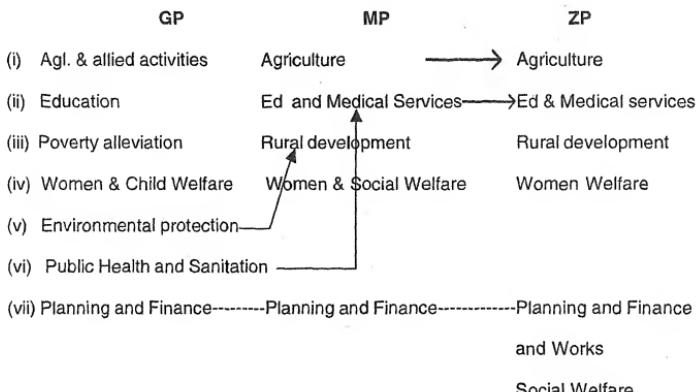
The representation from the CBOs is to be done on similar lines as that of the MP. The election/selection of ZPTC's etc are all described in the PR Act. The Chairperson of the ZP now heads four of the Standing Committees, this should be reduced to two. -Planning and Finance Works. The fee allowance, etc are already in vogue and can be followed by adding on representation of the CBOs.

**Linkage of functionaries :** The Project Directors of different projects should be accountable to the Chief Executive Officer of ZP. This should be possible under the proposed structure of placing an officer of the IAS cadre as the CEO.

The Standing Committees at the ZP should be into policy making and advisory roles. Also, revise the performance of the Standing Committee of the MP and the functional Committees of the GP. The Standing Committee of the MP should be into monitoring and also implementation.

The Standing Committees at the Mandal can perform the role of (a) monitoring and (b) arbitration. Monitoring can not only be regulatory also if incentive, encouraging the CBOs to perform better by arranging for monetary incentive, the Committees at the MP arbitrate when there is dispute between different GPs due to overlapping of function and jurisdiction (watershed area). The functional Committee of the GP should be into planning and implementation, for those activities at the MP that also involves implementation, the fund release options similar to the one's described for the GP can be followed.

**The interlinkage between the committees of the three tiers :**



Source: S. Sitaram, Report Submitted to SERP Govt of Andhra Pradesh, 2002.

Establishing a system through which Self Help Groups (CBOs) and PRIs interface effectively, is eminently possible because by nature and mandate both these institutions have the same objective, viz., of ushering people centred development (Report of the Task Force Committee, 2002), improved governance, greater accountability and transparency together with the convergence and better coordination is also critical to the realization of objectives in the area of poverty reduction and social development.

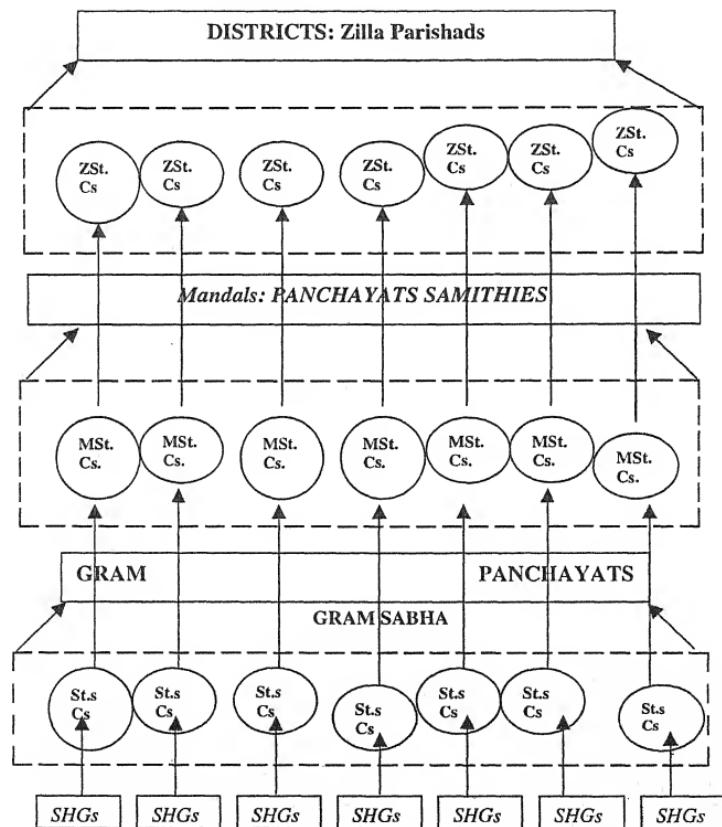
These self help groups, however, interface with large number of government and elected institutions at the grassroots level, particularly PRIs. The efficiency of these self-help groups (SHGs) would be considerably enhanced if a symbiosis could be worked out between SHGs and PRIs. The key to this is to integrate these existing groups with the empowered panchayats when the requisite devolution of powers, functions and authority to them takes places (Task Force Report, 2002).

**The Model Suggested by Task Force Is as Follows :**

"Andhra Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act, 1994, provides for six functional standing committees at the gram panchayat (GP) level. The seven to ten self help groups operating at the village level also represent more or less the same or similar types of activities. The gram sabhas shall coopt one or more representatives of the SHGs into the respective standing committees of the gram Panchayat. For instance, members of the village education committee will be coopted as members of the standing committee on education at the gram Panchayat level. From amongst the coopted members on the standing committees on education in all

the gram panchayats, in a mandal, the mandal Panchayat will coopt in an open meeting of the mandal panchayat samiti, a member/members onto the standing committee on education of the mandal Panchayat. The zilla parishad in turn will coopt, in an open meeting of the zilla parishad from amongst the coopted members of standing committees on education of all the mandal panchayats in the district. The mechanism for selecting members in the other standing committees from the SHGs will be similar, starting from the gram Panchayat level to the zilla parishad level".

Diagrammatic Representation of the Proposed Relationship between Self Help Groups and Panchayati Raj Institutions in Andhra Pradesh



St.s = Standing Committees

SHGs = Self Help Groups

MSt.Cs = Mandal Level Standing Committees

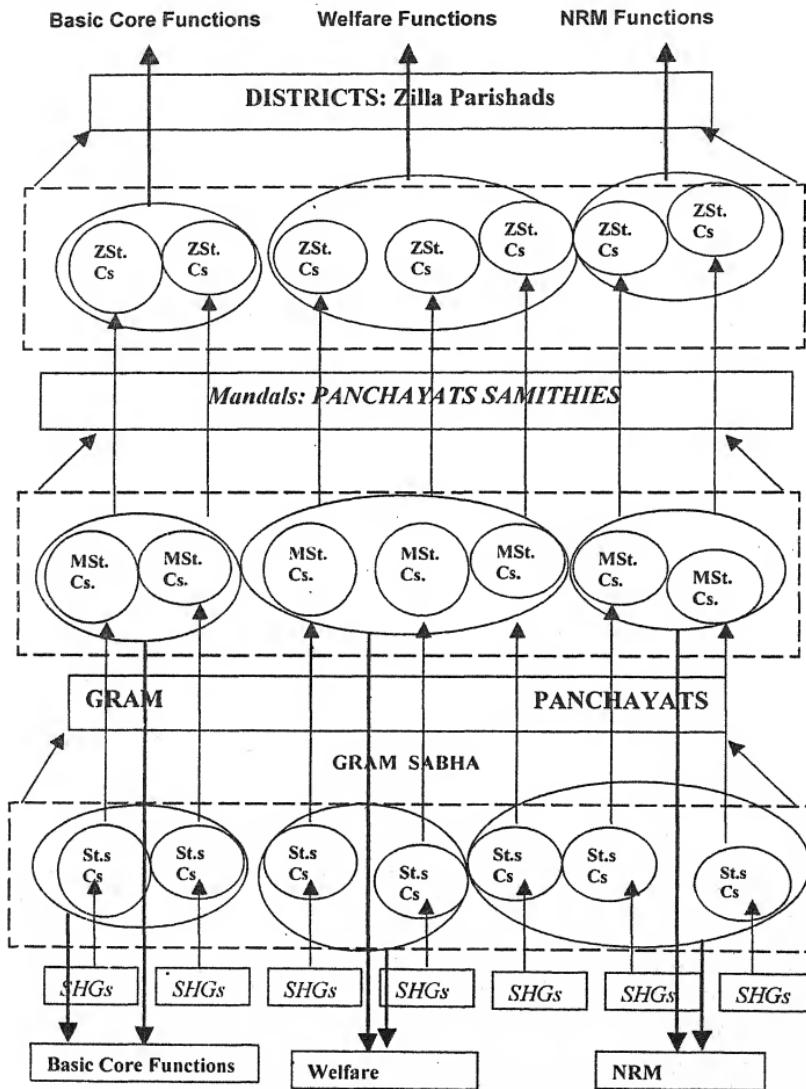
ZSt. Cs = Zilla Parishad Level Standing Committees

Source: Draft –Report of the Task Force Committee on Convergence of Programmes by Empowering the Self-Help groups and Panchayati Raj Institutions

The success of the benefits flowing from attaining the symbiosis between SHGs and PRIs will depend to a large on three things:

- a) Strengthening of the PR institutions themselves.
- b) Bringing convergence of development programmes and institutions being implemented in the state by different agencies and line departments.
- c) Building the capacity of the Self-Help groups.

## **Proposed Model of Synergy between PRIs and CBOs**



The above proposed Model calls for rationale and justification in analytical terms. The functions/items enshrined in the 11th Schedule of the constitution can be broadly divided into three major areas/activities namely, Core/Basic Functions, Welfare Functions and National Resource Management (NRM) Functions. Here our approach is 'bottom-up', as most of these activities currently carried out at the village level mainly by CBOs. Besides it is presumed that given the capacity of PRIs, their involvement in the activities would be different from one function to another. This not only addresses the issue of overburdening the PRIs but also negates the arguments regarding lack of capacity with PRIs.

The Core/basic functions such as drinking water supply, health, sanitation including primary health centres and dispensaries, education including primary and secondary, roads, bridges and other amenities, etc, are the functions PRIs have been given mandate from its inception. The CBOs handling such activities such as Education Committees, Health Committees which are going to be integrated into the standing committees of PRIs are late entries in this arena of operation. In this scenario, PRIs given its long experience in handling these schemes would be the dominant bodies in terms of planning, implementation and monitoring of these functions. Members of the CBOs representing Standing Committees will act as pressure groups for efficient implementation and equitable distribution of the benefits.

The second arena of the discharging welfare functions such as poverty alleviation programmes, women and child development, social welfare of weaker sections such as SC/ST and physically challenged persons and other functions (Rural Housing and Managing Public Distribution System) require that PRIs take slightly higher responsibility, of course, working in tandem with CBOs looking after some of these functions. Mention may be made of DPIP (Velugu) SHGs, Mothers Committees and Disabled Groups etc. In this scenario, medium interface between PRIs and CBOs is desirable.

In the third arena i.e., Natural Resource Management (NRM) activities such as water, watersheds, forests, agriculture etc, PRIs interface with CBOs is expected to be low which means that CBOs that are formed to manage water resource such as Watershed Committees (WCs) and Water Users Associations (WUAs) and forest resources (VSS/FPCS) need to be given larger role as they are found very effective in managing such resources. Most of the functions require technical skills and deep knowledge of the management of the resource. These CBOs formed around such resources found to have high stakes and PRIs which are governance institutions are found wanting in handling such resources and their capacities are found inadequate. At the most, PRIs can be monitoring institutions where by accountability of the CBOs can be ensured to the constitutionally elected bodies. In this arena of managing NRM activities low interface between PRIs and CBOs is envisaged. In NRM arena PRIs can function mainly as watch dog.

The picture which is visualised at village level may be replicated at mandal and district levels. At district level apex agencies such as District Water Management Agencies (DWMA) looking after watersheds and District Rural Development Agencies (DRDA), District Forest Agency and Drinking Water and Sanitation bodies (looking after Swajaladhra Programme that is in the offing) need to be synergised with varying degrees of responsibilities with zilla parishads. Thus, the bottom-up approach of the planning process synergising PRIs and CBOs is complete.

**Conclusion :**

The working of PR Institutions in tandem with Community Based Organisations/Parallel Institutions is a hard reality. Even through the primacy of PR institutions in the decentralised governance is emphasised as per the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, the role of the parallel institutions can not be undermined in overall development of the village and local development.

A synergy or symbiosis of PRIs and Parallel institutions is the need of the hour. Most of the conflicts can be avoided between these set of institutions if a workable model is arranged in each of the State looking at the strengths and weakness of these institutions. It is in this context that AP model linking PRIs and CBOs in a holistic framework appears well thought over policy measure. It is unfortunate this model of synergy is not put into practice.

Proposed model suggests that various functions enshrined in the 11th Schedule can be broadly divided into three major activities namely Core/Basic functions, Welfare functions and Natural Resource Management (NRM) functions. PRIs given its long experience in handling these schemes would be ideal institutions to plan, implement and monitor these functions and the members of the CBOs representing standing committees will act as pressure groups for better functioning of these functions. In discharging welfare functions such as poverty alleviation programmes, social welfare of weaker sections it is proposed that PRIs take slightly higher responsibility, of course, working in tandem with CBOs looking after some of the these functions. Lastly, PRIs interface with CBOs in the NRM arena is expected to be low which allows CBOs to play bigger role as they are found very effective and in this arena PRIs can play monitoring and watchdog functions.

The above model of synergy in A.P between PRIs and CBOs go long way in making bottom – up planning process a meaningful exercise.

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## INDIA'S RESPONSE TO GLOBALISATION : A PERCEPTEBLE SHIFT IN ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

Smita Srivastava

*The changes in national and international scenario compelled India to rethink its policies in the 1990s. It became quite evident that a shift in the policies is urgently required to meet the challenges thrown up by Globalisation. India not only introduced several economic reforms like liberalization, dismantling of trade barriers, de-regulation, privatization, but also brought about many changes in its political and administrative policies. Steps were taken towards de-centralization, creating new departments in the ministries, right to information, e-governance etc. Some of these measures have borne some fruit. On the one hand, India's economy has registered a high rate of growth, foreign exchange reserve has increased to \$ 165 billion, it has become an investment and outsourcing destination, and witnessed an IT revolution but on the other hand, 27.81 % population is below poverty line and India's performance in human resource development is dismal. The challenge before the policy makers is to frame such policies which beget for India optimal benefits not only in terms of high economic growth but also in terms of providing a good and decent life to its teeming millions who are deprived of elementary and bare necessities.*

One of the most vigorously debated topics today is 'globalisation'. Its impact has been more far-reaching than imagined. The era of globalisation is opening up many opportunities for millions of people around the world. As tariff and other barriers among countries are getting lowered, trade is expanding, transport and communication costs fall, and technologically advanced enterprises move to different locations, globalisation is turning the whole world into a common village. But globalisation also poses serious risks to countries, which are unable to reform their own markets and become internationally competitive. Notwithstanding the risks and challenges flowing from globalisation, no single country, or even a group of countries even if they act together would be able to arrest the march of liberalisation and globalisation. Globalisation has special importance for developing countries, which can make best use of it by their prudent public policy formulations.

Scholars define the term according to their perceptions and it has been observed that the economic connotation of the term has taken precedence over its several other aspects.

In this paper an attempt has been made not only to explain the term 'globalisation' but also to discuss its impact on India's economic as well as political and administrative policies and also to suggest how India can avail this phenomenon to solve its various problems and upgrade its position in the globe.

Generally by the term globalization is meant a process where there is a free flow of information, trade, ideas, people, labour and culture across the globe. It is an umbrella term for a complex series of economic, social, technological, cultural and political changes seen as increasing interdependence, integration and interaction among people and companies in

disparate locations.

A perusal of some of the best known definitions of the term would make this evident. According to J. Wiseman 'Globalisation is the most slippery, dangerous and important buzzword of the late twentieth century. It is slippery because it can have many meanings and be used in many ways. It is dangerous because too often it is used as a powerful and simplistic justification for the endless expansion of unregulated capitalist relations into every part of life in every corner of the globe. It is important because debates about globalisation can illuminate a world in which time and space have been so dramatically compressed that distant actions in one corner of the globe have rapid and significant repercussions on people and places far away,'<sup>1</sup>

In Modelska's perception, globalisation is a process along four dimensions: economic globalisation, formation of world opinion, democratisation, and political globalisation. This was rounded off with the assertion that changes along one of these dimensions (such as economic globalisation) elicited changes among the other dimensions.<sup>2</sup>

According to Tehranian, Globalisation is a process that has been going on for the past 5000 years, but it has significantly accelerated since the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991. Elements of globalisation include transborder capital, labour, management, news, images, and data flows. The main engines of globalisation are the transnational corporations (TNCs), transnational media organisations (TMCs), intergovernmental organisations (IGOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and alternative government organisations (AGOs). From a humanist perspective, globalisation entails both positive and negative consequences: it is both narrowing and widening the income gaps among and within nations, intensifying and diminishing political domination, and homogenizing and pluralizing buzzword cultural identities.<sup>3</sup>

In my point of view, to determine the meaning of globalisation in order to study the impact of globalisation on public policy formulation, a narrow perspective definition from a single view can not describe or analyse the impact of globalisation on public policy formulation comprehensively.

Therefore, in this work, the meaning of globalisation will cover all the above-mentioned aspects, whether economic, political, sociological, communicative and geographical.

#### **Causes of Globalisation**

Princeton historian Harold James suggests that most people tend to confuse the cause of globalisation with its effects. International openness, he says, did not lead to the spread of technology. Rather, it was "technical changes and efficiencies of scale that have made purely national markets relatively inefficient," thereby compelling business to spread across borders.<sup>4</sup>

There have been a number of reasons for the onset of Globalization. They are interrelated also. One thing led to another and so on. Some of the responsible factors are as follows :

### Travel Technology

Lloyd Geering suggests that technology is perhaps the most obvious cause of globalisation, particularly the technology that so rapidly advanced travel and communication across geographical and ethnic barriers that it led to the death of distance.

### Migration

From the sixteenth century onwards, and particularly in the nineteenth century, ocean travelled to the European colonisation of the Americas, Africa and Oceania. This enabled the European nations to export their surplus population and thus began the global intermingling of races that has continued ever since.

### Communication Technology

New technology made another huge contribution to globalisation by intensifying the communication of news, the spread of ideas and the transfer of information

The last two decades have witnessed the introduction of the internet, offering a new way of sending information almost instantaneously around the world. Electronic mail via the internet provides fast and cheap personal intercommunication on a global scale.

### End of Cold War

The cold war between the two super powers ended with the dismemberment of Soviet Union. The policy of iron curtain and bamboo curtain became obsolete and emphasis was laid on openness and free flow of information.

### Interaction between Economic and Political Development

However, many claim that the interaction between economic and political development is the main cause of globalisation. Politics and economy some of the most basic forces in globalisation are the combination of political choices that make countries more open and integrated, and new economic opportunities for the flow of goods, services, capital and information between countries. Kurt M. Campbell suggested that greater transparency for movements of money, people, and products could well advance the cause of globalisation.<sup>6</sup>

### Tourism

Tourism is one area in particular that embodies the concepts of globalisation. It is both a cause of globalisation, as it increases the connectivity of people and places, as well as an effect of globalisation, as it is enhanced by greater access to information and improved transportation International and regional organizations

There has been a remarkable institutionalisation of intergovernmental and transnational networks of political interaction. This is expressed in, among other things, the establishment

of formal organisations, such as UN and Greenpeace, and more informal bodies, such as regular contacts between the central bankers of the world's most powerful states and the existence of transnational drug cartels. To this can be added, the growth of new centres of authority above, below and alongside the state, for instance, the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the ED and foreign multinational corporations.

#### **Recognition of global nature of several problems:**

It was realised that many problems faced by the world like terrorism, pollution, drugs, and Aids could only be solved by concerted efforts of all the countries.

#### **India's Response to Globalisation**

At the dawn of independence, India started on a journey of economic development, with the twin principles of democracy and socialism. India's public policymakers, many early post-independence leaders, such as Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of the country were influenced by socialist ideas and advocated government intervention to guide the economy, including state ownership of key industries.

The objective was to achieve high and balanced economic development in the general interest while particular programs and measures helped the poor. India's leaders also believed that industrialisation was the key to economic development. This belief was all the more convincing in India because of the country's large size, substantial natural resources, and the desire to develop its own defence industries.

The Industrial Policy Resolution of 1948 gave government a monopoly in armaments, atomic energy, and railroads, and exclusive rights to develop minerals, aircraft manufacturing, shipbuilding, and manufacturing of telephone and telegraph equipment. The Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956 greatly extended the preserve of government. As a result, the private sector was relegated primarily to production of consumer goods. The public sector also expanded more in services. In 1956 the life insurance business was nationalised, and in 1973 the general insurance business was also acquired by the public sector. Most large commercial banks were nationalised in 1969.

Export growth was long ignored. Controls were usually imposed to correct specific problems but often without adequate consideration of their effect on other parts of the economy. For example, the government set low prices for basic foods, transportation, and other commodities and services, a policy designed to protect the living standards of the poor. However, the policy proved counterproductive when the government also limited the output of needed goods and services. Price ceilings were implemented during shortages, but the ceiling frequently contributed to black markets in those commodities and to tax evasion by black-market participants. Import controls and tariff policy stimulated local manufacturers toward production of import-substitution goods, but under conditions devoid of sufficient competition

or pressure to be efficient.

Performance of the Indian economy during 1947-1991 has been summarized thus, "Growth had been inadequate; poverty, hunger, and illiteracy persisted amid abundant food stocks; much of industry remained internationally non-competitive and required import of technology; and the public sector did not generate significant surplus and remained inefficient."<sup>7</sup>

Therefore, it seems that socialist democracy has not been able to achieve economic development goal and was not suitable for the globalisation era. Moreover, we have been witnessing, from the 1970s onward, the collapse of both fascism and communism. In Spain, fascism slowly eroded and then suddenly gave way to legal-parliamentary government and common-market capitalism.<sup>8</sup>

And after the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, it has become common wisdom that democracy requires capitalism—that is, an economic system where private owners of major means of wealth production (industry, natural resources, finance capital, means of distribution) are presumptively free to dispose of these assets and the profits obtained in their use as they wish.<sup>ix</sup> Thus capitalism and legal-representative democracy have become the main line of historical development.<sup>10</sup>

#### Opened Up India

Indira Gandhi returned to power in the general election of early 1980 with the slogan "government that works" and initiated some measures of economic liberalisation. That brought about some positive results.<sup>xii</sup> Following her assassination in 1984, Rajiv Gandhi succeeded her in office. He carried the process of economic liberalisation further.

As described by Desai "Rajiv Gandhi accelerated both the borrowing and the opening up of the economy, instituting a policy of import liberalisation and industry deregulation. The exchange rate was actively manipulated to depreciate the rupee and thereby encourage exports"

#### The Crisis of 1991 and the Need to Reforms

In the late 1980s, India relied on foreign borrowing to finance development plans to a greater extent than before. As a result, when the price of oil rose sharply in August 1990 due to Iraq invasion of Kuwait, the nation faced a balance of payments crisis.<sup>xiii</sup> In addition, many Indian workers residing in Persian Gulf states either lost their jobs or returned home out of fear for their safety, thus reducing the flow of remittances. The direct economic impact of the Persian Gulf conflict was exacerbated by domestic social and political developments. In the early 1990s, there was violence over two domestic issues: the reservation of a proportion of public-sector jobs for members of Backward Castes and the Hindu-Muslim conflict due to demolition of Babri Masjid. The central government had fallen in November 1990 and was succeeded by a minority government. The cumulative impact of these events shook international confidence in India's economic viability, and the country found it increasingly difficult to borrow

internationally. As a result, India made various agreements with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other organisations that included commitments to speed up liberalisation.

### India's Globalisation Policies

Since there was a rapid erosion of foreign exchange reserves in 1991, the Government had to mortgage and sell its stock of gold deposited in Zurich and London banks. A new minority government headed by Shri Narsimha Rao had to tackle the problem. He appointed Dr. Manmohan Singh an economist as his finance minister. The latter approached the World Bank and the IMF for help. They were prepared to extend help provided the Government of India abandoned its forty year old policy of planning self-reliance and state control which in the judgment of these two institutions was responsible for stifling the springs of economic enterprise and making Indian economy high cost, low in quality and technologically backward. They wanted India to accept SAP-structural adjustment programme. This was the very programme which the two institutions had pushed in many Latin American, African and Asian countries. In June 1991, the initiation of major economic policies or reforms were introduced by the government of Mr. Narasimha Rao through the finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh. The Indian economy had undergone a remarkable transition. The objective of the reforms was to make the Indian economy grow quickly. The crisis induced a more systematic approach to globalisation policy. These policies involved :

- Removing restrictions on current payments and transfers to make the current account convertible, in accordance with article 8 of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) articles of agreement.
- Liberalising underlying current account transactions-particularly dismantling tariff and non-tariff trade barriers.
- Switching to a market-determined exchange rate-which, along with comfortable foreign exchange reserves, provided key "self-insurance" against globalisation shocks.
- Prudently managing the capital account to ensure a shift in capital inflows in favour of longer maturity debt and non-debt flows.
- Adopting a cautious, calibrated approach to capital account convertibility.

Moreover, measures ensuring a sound macroeconomic environment, a strong and resilient financial system, and above all an increased market orientation of the domestic economy greatly influenced the course of globalisation in terms of content, timing, and sequencing.<sup>13</sup>

### Indian Economy towards the Path of Liberalisation

The process of liberalisation increased after 1991. By the mid-1990s, the number of sectors reserved for public ownership was slashed, and private-sector investment was

encouraged in areas such as energy, steel, oil refining and exploration, road building, air transportation, and telecommunications. An area still closed to the private sector in the mid-1990s was defence industry. Foreign-exchange regulations were liberalised, foreign investment was encouraged, and import regulations were simplified. The average import-weighted tariff was reduced from 87 percent in FY 1991 to 33 percent in FY 1994. Despite these changes, the economy remained highly regulated by international standard. Post-liberalisation, India's international trade has become broad based and gone up. India's major trading partners are China, United States, UAE, UK, Japan and the European Union.<sup>14</sup>

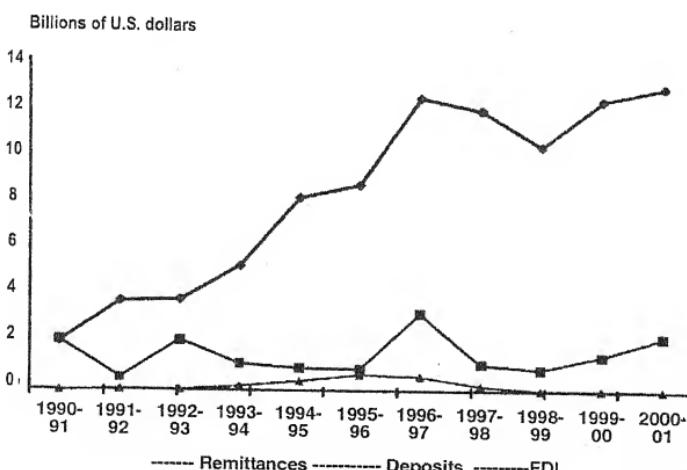
#### Flow of FDI

FDI in India grew over the decade by a multiple of 15, albeit from a very low average in the late 1980s largely owing to the gradual opening and flow of FDI to India, where the average annual flow stood at \$2.7 billion in the late 1990s.<sup>15</sup>

#### Non-resident Indians as a Force of Globalisation

Cross-border movement of labour has generally been limited by the very restrictive immigration policies of industrial countries.

**Figure 2.5 Contributions by non-resident Indians, 1990-2001**



Source: G-20 Secretariat's report (2003)

Despite the restrictive international regime for labour mobility, non-resident Indians—both skilled and unskilled—have taken advantage of the limited scope for migration and with their committed work in foreign countries provided a strong channel of connectivity between the Indian economy and the global economy.

### Globalisation through Trade in Services

Trade in services, though growing, still lags significantly behind merchandise exports. Exports of services as a percentage of merchandise exports, however, showed a significant increase in the second half of the 1990s. At 42 percent in 2000-01, this share is one of the highest in the world, particularly in relation to about 10-20 percent for China and the Far East, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, and even about 26 percent for the United Kingdom and the United States. This suggests that even though India's degree of trade integration with the global economy is not very high, services exports seem to be of much greater importance in recent years in relation to the world average. Unlike China, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Poland, Russia, South Africa, and Thailand, where tourism and transportation services account for the major share of services exports, in India other services account for the larger share. This makes India's pattern of services exports akin to that in advanced countries like Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States and some developing countries like Brazil, Malaysia, and Turkey.<sup>16</sup>

### India's Software Boom—the Most Visible Benefit of Globalisation

India's strong performance on the software front was largely facilitated by the globalisation process. In the second half of the 1990s software exports exhibited compound average growth of 62.3 percent, as against 46.8 percent growth in domestic market sales, in U.S. dollar terms software exports registered average annual growth of 46.1 percent during the entire 1990s.

This rate of growth has been unprecedented both in terms of overall growth and growth in exports. In 2000-01 software exports hit a peak of \$6.3 billion

The Indian government in 2005 liberalised investment in the civil aviation, telecom, and construction sectors. Privatisation of government-owned industries essentially came to a halt in 2005, and continues to generate political debate; continued social, political, and economic rigidities hold back needed initiatives. The economy has posted an average growth rate of more than 7% in the decade since 1994, reducing poverty by about 10 percentage points.<sup>17</sup>

In the 21st century, there has been a dramatic shift in India's approach to external sector management in keeping with the changing circumstances. The main contributors to the positive outcome in India's current account are workers' remittances and export of software, both being a result of the process of global integration. The exchange rate regime as well as external debt management has served India well, especially the avoidance of sovereign debt through commercial borrowings. The new policy regime helped India withstand several global

crises while maintaining a respectable growth. The capital account has acquired the primary focus rather than the current account. A judicious integration with the global trade regime has imparted some competitive efficiency and confidence to the domestic industry and perhaps, even to commercial agriculture though to a limited extent. It has become evident that the management of the external sector is closely linked to the domestic sector and the major thrust of Indian public policy is now on managing the integration.

### **A Powerful New Player in the Global Economy**

At present, the economy of India is the fourth largest in the world as measured by purchasing power parity (PPP), with a gross domestic product (GDP) of US \$3.63 trillion. When measured in USD exchange rate terms, it is the twelfth largest in the world, with a GDP of US \$ 775 billion (2005). India was the second fastest growing major economy in the world, with a GDP growth rate of 8.1 % at the end of the first quarter of 2005-2006 significantly expanding manufacturing.

This captivating pattern of growth has been shaping a new global economic geography. India, with billion plus people, has emerged as a significant player in the global economy as well as in the global politics.

### **Global Trends in Indian Politics and Administration**

Since the 1980s, there has been a shift in the conventional main stream of public sector management from Traditional Bureaucratic Administration into Managerialism.

With respect to this new paradigm, the public sector management theory, the so-called 'Market-Based Public Administration' emerged in 1992. This approach, later termed as Entrepreneurial Government by Osborne and Gaebl (1993), emphasises the entrepreneurial roles in public sector management and is fundamentally guided by market mechanisms. Besides an attempt to achieve outcomes, the Entrepreneurial Government also aims to improve efficiency, effectiveness, service quality and management for change.

### **Globalisation Process and Good Governance**

According to this new paradigm, there are three major actors in governance, namely : government, civil society, and business society. Thus, "good governance" involves these three actors with their respective functions.

To achieve good governance, some requirements, as summed up in the "good government quality index," need to be met. They are :

- (1) Societal participation index which represents political stability and the freedom of speech
- (2) Governance orientation index derived from the indicators of efficiency in justice and efficient and corruption-free bureaucracy.

- (3) Social development index indicated by human development and distribution of income.
- (4) Economic management index indicated by world market orientation, independent central bank, and ratio of debt to GNP.

Based on these four indices, some Asian countries can be grouped into three categories in terms of their governance quality: "GOOD", "MODERATE" and "POOR" as shown in Table 1.<sup>18</sup>

| No. | Country         | Quality Index | Governance Quality |
|-----|-----------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1   | Singapore       | 65            | GOOD               |
| 2   | Japan           | 63            |                    |
| 3   | Malaysia        | 58            |                    |
| 4   | South Korea     | 57            |                    |
| 5   | Sri Lanka       | 45            | MODERATE           |
| 6   | The Philippines | 44            |                    |
| 7   | India           | 43            |                    |
| 8   | Thailand        | 43            |                    |
| 9   | China           | 39            | POOR               |
| 10  | Indonesia       | 38            |                    |
| 11  | Nepal           | 36            |                    |
| 12  | Pakistan        | 34            |                    |

The figure in Table I shows that India has "moderate governance." Therefore, India needs to improve to compete with other countries. A fundamental change would be needed in order to achieve a governmental bureaucracy that is free from corruption, sinecurism and nepotism. India ranked a dismal 124th in Human Resource Development according to World Bank report 2005. In the Corruption Perception Index for the year 2004, India was ranked 90 in a group of 146 countries according to the report of Transparency International in 2004. xix. Indeed democratic institutions cannot perform their role adequately if the actions of political leaders, civil servants, police officers, judges and others can be mobilized in defence of private and specified interests through illegal inducements.<sup>20</sup>

The demands of civil society organisations for better social services have spurred the government to launch campaigns to increase literacy and improve public infrastructure. And their calls for greater accountability and real decentralisation of power are increasing the likelihood that expenditures for poverty reduction will reach the needy.<sup>21</sup> The government faces three major challenges in redressing poverty: first, to expand economic opportunities; second, to ensure that the poor are empowered to take advantage of new opportunities in a rapidly changing world; and third, to ensure that an effective safety net is in place to reduce vulnerability and protect the very poor and destitute.<sup>22</sup>

### Administrative Reforms in India

Since the beginning of new economic system in 1991 the basic strategy of administrative reforms has been decentralisation of developmental decision-centres and activities, creation of trade organisations in service and business sector, privatisation of non-essential and consumer services, participation of private sector in commercial and business administration, establishment of independent authorities to regulate commercial and business contracts and agreements in government services, abolition of inspectors system, abolition of bureaucratic obstacles and bottlenecks, more transparency in government decisions, activities and contracts, grant of right to information, simplification of laws, rules and regulations, deconcentration of administrative structures, downsizing the staff, involvement of technology in office management more specifically computerisation of procedures, records and correspondence, and minimising the chances of corruption in administration, avoiding legal battles, abolition of unnecessary administrative organisations, tax and tariff reforms and redesigning the economic organisations and institutions, etc.

In this reform strategy, major emphasis was laid down on policy formulation and framework. Policy choices and alternatives were not evolved. Policy making centres are confined to administrative officials. People participation and specialised and professional organisations are being still ignored or not prioritized. Imbalance between the regulatory and developmental role of administration is also an area of policy evaluation in the study of new economic policy and administrative reforms. In these reforms, internationally competitive government organisations to protect the interest and property rights of the country were not seriously considered. Publicity of reforms at the international level was also ignored. Training was not properly catered to bring attitudinal and orientational changes in the administrative system.<sup>23</sup>

In evolving the policy framework, the major emphasis was put on the development of infrastructure sector with the collaboration of private and foreign investors in order to generate more employment and to reduce the number of below poverty line people. Joint ventures were promoted in core and consumer items and the investors were motivated to initiate in the market economy. These policy frameworks have provided a set of directives to the administrative officials to act on the thrust of such policies. Necessary amendments / modifications are made in several laws, rules and regulations to abolish bureaucratic discretion, obstacles, delays, red tapism, problems, etc. Further, policy reforms were also introduced to provide a suitable environment for development.

### Establishment of New Administrative Organisations

To implement several policies, a major reshuffle was carried out in the Union Government Ministries / Departments as well as some new organisations were also created. However the Ministry of Finance, Home Affairs, Commerce, Education, Personnel, Pension and

Administrative Reforms, Civil Aviation, Transport, Environment, etc. were redesigned to suit the needs of the new economic system. Some of the administrative positions were abolished, redesigned or renamed to cut down the size of ministries and bring efficiency and effectiveness in administrative operations and activities. Some of the ministries have also been reoriented for privatisation and foreign collaboration or joint ventures like Civil Aviation, Telecommunication, Broadcasting, Power (electricity) etc. In some of the ministries, new administrative organisations and institutions were created ego in the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Commerce and Industry following institutions were added;

#### **Ministry of Finance**

- a. LokPal (Ombudsman) of India
- b. Export Processing Zones Council
- c. Foreign Direct Investment Board

#### **Ministry of Commerce and Industry**

- a. Over the Counter Agreements
- b. Single Window License System for Export
- c. Export - Incentives System
- d. Patents Review Board
- e. Intellectual Property Rights Protection Board
- f. Monopolies Restricted Trade Practices Commission (MRTPC)
- g. Trade and Tariff Review Council

#### **Deregulation**

In the new system of the country, government has tried to deregulate some of the core and consumer areas where government regulation was creating obstacles in the development of industry like deregulation of cement, non-petroleum products, sugar, steel, milk-products, liquor, gold-silver, electronics, computer software, telecommunication equipments, paper, edible oils, soaps, cosmetic prices. Government is also inclined to deregulate those areas where healthy competition can bring efficiency and foster development like Bank interest rates, non-banking companies, environment friendly companies, higher educational institutions more particular foreign universities, foreign exchange, full convertibility of Indian Rupee in Current account, media-foreign newspapers publication in India, Insurance (40% deregulation proposed) Sector, etc. Although government is prepared to deregulate more sectors of economy, there are three major problems to deregulate rapidly: - a) poor masses and unaware consumer; b) lack of technology in marketing and c) large size of staff, keeping these problems in mind, the

Government is deregulating the sectors on priority basis.

### Decentralisation

In a centrally planned economy, decentralisation is a big problem both politically and administratively. A major step was initiated in 1993 - 94 to create a third tier of Indian federation by constitutional amendments. It has brought drastic changes in the Indian urban and rural local governments.<sup>xxiv</sup> These governments were empowered with constitutional rights, duties, and resources and finances. One third seats in the local governments are reserved for women. It is heartening to note that of the thirty lakhs elected representatives ten lakhs are women.

### Ensuring the Use of Modern Technology

Communication technologies are being provided even at the village-level official machinery in order to link up the whole administration in a national network. More emphasis is laid on remote and hilly town to link them up with the district and state administration

### Ensuring Trust in the Civil Services

To maintain standard of services, and to avoid these problems in the new economy, government has activated its anti-corruption machinery like CBI, anti-corruption bureau and state level ombudsman (Lokayukta) in state administration and also considering to establish a national level Ombudsman (LokPal) to investigate such corruption charges. A National Debate on Effective and Responsive Administration culminated in the Conference of Chief Ministers that was held on 24th May 1997. One of the areas that were to be addressed under Accountable and Citizen Friendly Government was Citizen's Charters. Citizen's Charters are expected to include vision and mission statement, details of business transacted by the organization, clients' details, services provided to every client- group, grievance redress mechanism and the way to get it and what is expected from the clients i.e. 'obligations of the users.' The number of Citizen's Charters formulated till June 30, 2005 by Central Government ministries/Departments Organisations is 108 and that by State Governments and Union Territories is 629.<sup>xxv</sup> The Right to Information which came into force in October 2005 would go a long way in making administration transparent and accountable.

### Suggestions :

While openness to international financial flows brings important and long-lasting benefits, it can raise the cost of bad macroeconomic and structural policies, weak institutions, and political uncertainty. Opening to international capital flows needs to be closely monitored. Careful sequencing is important to provide time to build domestic economic institutions and prudential supervision. A great political challenge is for leaders to create a domestic climate supportive of policies that will build wealth. Such reforms can be enacted in balanced, timely policy packages that reduce the risk of crisis.

Good social policies are also critical to meeting the economic challenges of globalisation. Governments and the international community must work together to ensure the provision of efficient and affordable programs that help with transitional impacts of change-as well as those that provide the skills and knowledge for people and businesses to respond to the rapidly changing demands of the global market.<sup>xxvi</sup>Vigilant public opinion can play a very constructive role in the framing of policies helpful in meeting the challenges. If India has to emulate China in market success, it is not adequate just to liberalize economic controls in the way the Chinese have done, without creating the social opportunities that post reform China inherited from the pre reform transformation. The reach of China's market rests on the solid foundations of social changes that had occurred earlier and India cannot simply hope for that reach, without making enabling social changes in education, health care, land reform etc- that help make the market function in the way it has in China.<sup>27</sup>

Reforms in infrastructures such as transport, power generation, and telecommunications have particular potential to improve overall economic performance by lowering costs and thus speeding the dividends from adaptation to global opportunities.

Good governance is needed to develop public administrative system at all levels of society - in terms of the rule of law, democracy, human rights and social equity. It is essential for a fair and productive process of globalization.

Policymakers must seek a globalisation with a social dimension which sustains human values and enhances the well-being of people, in terms of their freedom, prosperity and security. Globalisation is seen through the eyes of women and men in terms of the opportunity it provides for decent work; for meeting their essential needs for food, water, health, education and shelter and for a livable environment. Without such a social dimension, many will continue to view globalisation as a new version of earlier forms of domination and exploitation.

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## FOREIGN POLICY POSITION OF BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY TOWARDS ISSUES OF INDIA PAKISTAN RELATIONS

Sanjeev Kr. H.M.

*In a modern liberal democracy, the role of political parties in the policy making process is decisive. They provide institutional character to the articulated interests of the citizens. Their policy involvement is fundamentally guided by the basic principles and ideology in which the party is embedded. But the overarching impact of the party's position in the political structure cannot be undermined. Not only the approach of a party towards a policy matter is determined by the domestic political equations and the prevailing international situation, but that approach is bound to change due to domestic tumult, international turmoil and the party's varying position in the polity.*

"There is an integral relationship between domestic politics and foreign affairs of a country."<sup>1</sup> Both spheres are inter-woven to each other. The domestic strength of a Country composes a sound economy, political stability and adequate space for people's participation in policy processes. "A country which faces tunnoil in domestic politics cannot withstand the turbulence of world politics."<sup>2</sup>

The position of a country in the ambit of international affairs hinges upon its domestic strength. In the same way, the domestic sphere of a country is also considerably influenced by the prevailing international situation. Several domestic variables deeply influence the country's foreign policy. Prominently political structure, economic strength, public opinion, political parties, mass media, leadership and the military strength play a significant role in this regard. Hence a linkage between the domestic milieu and external environment of a polity is conspicuous. James N. Rosenau indicates: "In order to facilitate the development of the linkage theory we now expand the foregoing into a larger framework in which twenty four aspects of politics that might serve as or give rise to outputs and inputs have been identified, along with six aspects or from the polity p~rspective sub-environments of the international system that might generate or receive output and input."<sup>3</sup>

Promotion of national interest is the underlying challenge for any country's foreign policy. Political parties as institutional mechanisms of a liberal democracy constitute one of the significant domestic factors determining how foreign policy will accomplish this task. The fundamental role of political parties lies in their indulgence in making policy prescription and generating popular opinion on crucial policy matters. Arguably almost all modern governments are party governments and policy makers are also members of political parties. Hence they are guided by the electoral promises, programs, ideology and principles of the ruling party while enacting the countries foreign policy. They are also influenced by domestic political scenario, changing international situation, public opinion and opposition parties.

The opposition participates in the process of foreign policy making through debates, discussions and asking questions in the parliament on significant issues pertaining to the countries international affairs. The criticisms and comments of the opposition parties act as

qualitative inputs for the foreign policy makers and will have a major bearing upon the nature of foreign policy in future. For instance, the on going debate in India over the Indo-U.S. civilian nuclear deal among major political parties seems to have considerably influenced the shaping of India's foreign policy towards the matter. The reflections of which might be seen in the Prime Minister's statement in Rajya Sabha of 17 August 2006, indicating the Indian Government's position on the deal. The statement was an attempt to obliterate all the doubts of political parties regarding any unilateral endeavour on the part of the U.S. to revise the provisions of the agreement to its own advantage through internal legislations.

Similarly when the country is confronted with a crisis situation, the ruling party attempts to evolve consensus among all political parties so as to hold the nation together in such a critical moment. The way in which the BJP led NDA Government firmly refused to send troops to Iraq through a parliamentary resolution reflected the Government's success in evolving a national consensus on a crucial foreign policy issue. In this regard it can be inferred that political parties play a vital role in a modern liberal democracy, in determining the nature and content of its foreign policy. They either in a single party Government or in a multi party coalition, have a monumental role in determining the texture of the country's foreign policy.

Indo-Pakistan relations constitute a major component of India's foreign policy. The nettled relationship between the two countries has constrained both governments to accord top priority to issues of mutual concern. In India Indo-Pakistan relations has not only dragged serious attention of the leadership, scholars, journalists and strategists but also it is a subject of interest and concern for the common man.

Issues relating to India Pakistan relations figure prominently in the foreign policy position of major Indian political parties. They being the institutional mechanisms of the Indian political system have contributed significantly in dealing with the problems by which the relations of the two sub-continental neighbours have been plagued. How political parties perceive the problems of Indo-Pakistan relations determines the effectiveness of India to identify remedial measures.

Hence it is pertinent to understand political party's perception and evaluation of the issues of Indo-Pakistan relations. The present paper is an endeavour to understand foreign policy position of the BJP towards Indo-Pakistan relations. Here the BJP has been selected on the following grounds. At the outset it is a major national party having a vital role in determining India's foreign policy towards Pakistan. Besides, the party led coalition Governments consecutively for six years and presently it is acting as a major opposition party. In the period of the BJP led regime, Indo-Pakistan relations was characterized by intense turmoil and it witnessed rapid changes. Hence it is felicitous to analyse how the party visualizes the various issues between the two countries.

Since inception the BJP, has been vociferous in articulating its views, on various issues relating to India Pakistan relations. The genesis of BJP's ideology and principles can be

traced to its parental link with the Bharatiya Jana Sangh. Since the first general election the Jana Sangh had been a major opposition party playing a crucial role in determining India's foreign policy towards Pakistan. Even during the short stint at the center as a part of Janata government, the Jana Sangh played a vital role in the evolution of India's foreign policy towards Pakistan. In this context the role of A.B. Vajpayee the then Jana Sangh leader as foreign minister can be accented. His historic visit to Pakistan as Foreign Minister went a long way in strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries.

In 1980, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh was transformed as the Bharatiya Janata Party. Hence here it can be stated that, as the BJP has been carved out of Jana Sangh, an examination of the views of Jana Sangh towards issues concerning Indo-Pakistan relation prior to that of the BJP, appears to be a prerequisite.

#### Approach of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh towards Indo-Pakistan relations

The essence of Jana Sangh's approach towards Indo-Pakistan relations lies in the critical standpoint it took on the then government's foreign policy particularly its policy towards Pakistan. The party held the view that Indo-Pakistan relations must get top priority in the nation's foreign policy. But the governments at the center were not giving proper heed to significant issues concerning Indo-Pakistan relations, such as the border dispute, infiltration, the problem of minorities and the issue of Kashmir.

The party criticized Pakistan for augmenting tension on the border. It believed : "Indo-Pakistan relations have been strained, since the day Pakistan was established as a separate State. In fact this estrangement is inherent in the circumstances in which Pakistan was born. Pakistan came into existence through the planned working up of Muslim hostility towards Hindus in India and it is keeping that hostility alive to sustain itself against the natural, historical, economic and cultural factors that point to the reunification of the two States. To that end its rulers have from the very first day been looking upon India as their enemy number one and behaving accordingly."<sup>4</sup>. The party considered "both communist China and Pakistan as India's natural enemies."<sup>5</sup>

Jana Sangh elaborated the idea that, the ultimate and permanent solution to the problems of India Pakistan relations is the reunification of the two territories and the establishment of integrated India. Defining its position the party stated: "The number of people who are beginning to realize that annulment of partition is essential for the well being of the country and for the maintenance of world peace is daily increasing both in Bharath and Pakistan. In fact most of the Indo-Pakistan problems such as Kashmir, rehabilitation of displaced persons, economic instability and increase in defense expenditure can all be permanently solved only by the establishment of Akhand Bharath."<sup>6</sup>

The party also argued that a policy of appeasement towards Pakistan had not brought any benefit to the nation. Hence it called for a structural re-orientation of the countries foreign policy towards Pakistan. As the latter had always followed a hostile policy towards India, the

foreign policy of the country must be made more stringent in order to counter its belligerence. The Jana Sangh noted: "the policy of appeasement that has so long been followed has not changed the mentality of the leaders of Pakistan, on the contrary it has strengthened it. The Jana Sangh is against giving any concessions to Pakistan on the question of, evacuee property, recovery of India's loans and canal water dues. The leaders of Pakistan having declared Bharat as their only enemy should be prepared for such a treatment."<sup>7</sup>

An analysis of the approach of Jana Sangh towards foreign policy position of the Indian Government regarding the country's relations with Pakistan indicates that like all opposition parties it displayed a sense of reprehension. It also had made capricious suggestions to deal with various problems that infected their relations. For instance, it viewed that the only solution for various problems like the Kashmir issue, the problem of minorities and the border disputes is the integration of the entire subcontinent and creation of unified India. This seems to be a very ambitious, philosophical and idealistic viewpoint, considering the divergences in the ideological predilections that influenced the inception of the two nations. In addition to this, it may be opined, the Hindu nationalistic dispositions of the party, renders its views to be biased. In this context, Geet Puri observes: "in the literature of Indian politics, political parties and party system in India, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh had been described variedly as reactionary, communal, Hindu revivalist, ultra rightist, militant nationalist in its ideological orientation and organizational behavior."<sup>8</sup>

Foreign policy position of BJP towards Indo-Pakistan relations Since origin, BJP held a critical standpoint towards various issues involved in the ambit of India Pakistan relations. The party has underscored the significance of having good relations with the neighbours and observes that a country which has more neighbours on its borders must evolve a rational foreign policy in order to maintain sanctity in the region. The party maintains: "it has been the party's view that our national interest is best served by creating an environment of peace and harmony in our neighbourhood. But this can only be done on the operation. Right from its inception the party has interaction with all our neighbouring countries."<sup>9</sup>

BJP is of the opinion that Pakistan is the most important neighbour to India, relations with whom commends great strategic relevance and the effectiveness of India's foreign policy largely depends upon its capacity to safeguard India's national interest when there is a bargain with Pakistan. On the lines of the Jana Sangh, the BJP expresses concern regarding the hostile nature of India Pakistan relations. Defining its position the BJP states that "we have today exceptionally good relations with all our neighbours except the very hostile Pakistan."<sup>10</sup>

US military assistance to Pakistan Since inception, one of the key foundations of Pakistan's foreign policy had been bellicosity towards India characterized by a paranoiac urge to acquire parity with its larger and stronger subcontinental neighbour. The psyche of the Pakistani ruling establishment was occupied by a sense of disgruntlement about the manner in which the subcontinent was divided. The discontentment fundamentally emerged because of the merger of some of the Muslim majority areas such as Hyderabad, Junagadh and

Jammu&Kashmir into India and the meager resources that Pakistan was entitled to receive after partition. Hence, attainment of military parity with India seemed to be an appropriate panacea for all the difficulties faced by the country. V.P. Dutta elaborates that "The urge for parity with India was deep and compulsive. The enmities and jealousies that the India-Pak relations witnessed were an inevitable part of psychology of separation and division. No sacrifice was too small, every effort was bent upon achieving equality with India's security considerations which were overlaid with a strong sense of rivalry and competition."<sup>11</sup>

At this moment, the origin of cold war politics and a bipolar rivalry between the US and the USSR created a tailor made situation for Pakistan and it joined the US military block and started receiving military assistance from the US. Here a notion prevailed that, "the failure to solve the Kashmir issue had brought about a US Pakistan military agreement and presented a threat to the whole of South Asia."<sup>12</sup>

BJP has viewed that the military assistance rendered to Pakistan by the US is a prominent source of threat to peace and security of South Asia. With this, the flames of cold war had permeated within the boundaries of the region. The party further stated that the US sought to bolster its own interests and attain vantage over the USSR as a part of its cold war grand strategy and in doing this it has jeopardized the peace and tranquility of the entire Asian region. Above all the US was making absurd projections that it is creating a security wall for the region against an anticipated Soviet offensive. The party commented: "It is the view of the BJP that the contemplated US arms assistance program to Pakistan is based on a faulty prognosis. From Turkey to Saudi Arabia to Pakistan the US is creating a cordon sanitaire in its attempts at containing USSR."<sup>13</sup>

The party considers that due to US military assistance to Pakistan, the development and economic stability in the region has been disturbed. To counter the upgradation of military technology by Pakistan, India has been compelled to divert its resources from development to defense. This is a hindrance to the socio-economic development of not only the two countries but it has impeded the progress of whole of South Asia, since an aura of insecurity always prevails in the region. "The BJP believes firmly that the peace security and progress of this region lies in friendship between India and Pakistan. What Pakistan needs is more is political stability and economic development not sophisticated armaments of offense."<sup>14</sup>

The party argues that the end of cold war struck an optimistic note and a hope was generated regarding the possible seizure of US arms assistance to Pakistan. Anyhow, it laments that US is still continuing its strategy of militarily building up Pakistan. The party also sees this U.S. action as a mute acceptance to Pakistan's nuclear program.

Defining its position the BJP states: "the BJP cannot but express its shock and resentment that despite the end of cold war, there continues to be a pro Pakistan tilt in the American policy. Further the US is preparing to reward Pakistan for its development of nuclear weapons of which the US intelligence agencies were fully aware, by supplying dozens of F 16

aircrafts which with some modifications can bombard large parts of India with nuclear weapons."<sup>15</sup>

But it may be opined that the end of cold war indicated major paradigm shifts in US's policy towards South Asia. US's condemnation of Pakistan after the Kargil crisis and the latest civilian nuclear deal between India and the U.S. which made latter's preference towards India ahead of Pakistan apparent. These developments indicated to the fact that in the changed international situation, the U.S. Does not require Pakistan as a regional base to counter the communist expansion because of the demise of Soviet Union. Hence BJP'S notion that the US is still tilted towards Pakistan even after the end of cold war does not seem to commend much relevance.

In addition to this the issue of U.S. military assistance to Pakistan cannot entirely be treated with an Indo-centric bias. Pakistan's internal compulsions may have also led it to join U.S. sponsored military alliance. Ashwini K Ray observes: "The primary motivation for Pakistan's alliance may have been the internal factors of the country rather than its foreign policy needs."<sup>16</sup> Hence, "The India centered explanation of the U.S. Pakistani military alliance and its subsequent re-incarnation obscures its true purpose and the overall dynamics of Pakistan's foreign policy as a protege of the U.S. although Pakistan's disputes with India were no doubt central to Pakistan's foreign policy immediately after independence. But it is a common mistake to look it too narrowly in the context exclusively of Pakistan's conflicts with its big neighbour. The fact is that U.S. alliance played no part whatever in Pakistan's wars with India, when it was defeated in 1965 and again in 1971. The U.S. administration took great care to ensure that Pakistan did not deploy the military hardware provided under the terms of the alliance in its conflicts with India."<sup>17</sup>

In this context US military assistance to Pakistan as an issue in India Pakistan relations appears to have become insignificant. So the views of BJP in this regard also seems to have become out of context. Not only there has occurred structural changes in the geometry of global politics but in turn this has also brought in qualitative changes in the nature of the bilateral relations between India and Pakistan and India and the US. A fundamental transformation in the nature of the triangular relationship between India, Pakistan and the US has also been witnessed. In this connection the opinion of some of the leaders of the BJP also underwent modifications, specifically after U.S.'s condemnation of Pakistan after the Kargil crisis. Expressing his views former BJP president L K Advani notes: "Indo-US ties had been liberated from the shackles of cold war, which was mainly responsible for Washington's widely perceived pro Pakistan tilt in the past."<sup>18</sup>

#### Kashmir issue

Partition of the subcontinent brought with it one of the most vexed territorial disputes of the present times, conflict over Kashmir. Ever since the creation of Pakistan, its leaders have expressed discontentment over this division. Pakistan has followed an irredentist policy and

presents its claims upon the territory on the basis of the axiom that as Pakistan was carved out of Muslim majority areas, Kashmir which was a Muslim majority territory should be one of its parts. Hence it argues that Kashmir remains to be an unfinished agenda of partition.

Its unavailing attempts to physically occupy Kashmir by an armed intrusion in liaison with the local tribesman in 1948 and its subsequent failures in 1965 and 1971 further exasperated the situation. Even the bilateral dialogues and agreements of Tashkent, Shimla, Lahore, Agra and mediation efforts of the U.N.O also have proved to be futile. In this situation the Pakistani coterie adopted odious means in its machinations to alter the geo-political status of Kashmir. After the wrecking defeat in 1971, it started a proxy war along the Indo-Pakistan border and sponsored insurgency and terrorism through its cabal consisting of the ISI. It has used terrorism as a subversive instrument of foreign policy to destabilize India and the policy here was to bleed the country by thousand cuts.

Apart from this, the divergent political perceptions of India and Pakistan on the Kashmir issue, yet again complicates the problem. If India terms violence in Kashmir as terrorism, Pakistan dubs it as freedom struggle and ventilates its abetment to terrorism as moral support to that struggle. Thus even after over half a century of their existence, both countries are enmeshed in conflict on one single issue of Kashmir. All the other issues are convoluted in the Kashmir issue. "It will not be an over simplification to state that the lack of normal, healthy and stable Indo-Pakistan relation is also due to unresolved Kashmir issue."<sup>19</sup>

The BJP had expressed very radical views on the issue of Kashmir. As an opposition, the party had condemned the Kashmir policy of successive Indian governments, as total failures. The party viewed that over the years, Kashmir policy had been marked by hollowness. As it did not give proper attention to the internal problems of the region, relating to its socio-economic development and political stability. The BJP commented: "the absence of political farsightedness and clarity of national objectives has resulted in our nation continuing to have to pay a price even fifty years after Jammu and Kashmir became a part of the republic because of the failure of the successive Congress governments to formulate a policy on Jammu and Kashmir that takes into account State's internal problems which have become a principle challenge to our nationhood."<sup>20</sup>

The BJP in its early days as an opposition emphasized that whole of Jammu and Kashmir including the territory under foreign occupation is an integral part of India. Criticizing Pakistan for perpetrating terrorist activities in Kashmir as a blatant interference in the internal affairs of the country, the party exhorted the government, "To take active steps to persuade Pakistan to abandon its policy of hostile interference in our internal affairs by supporting insurgent and terrorist groups."<sup>21</sup> ;and affirmed "unequivocally India's sovereignty over the whole of Jammu and Kashmir including the areas under foreign occupation."<sup>22</sup> Like the Jana Sangh, the party also reflects an inclination for reclaiming Pak occupied Kashmir in order to bring a permanent solution to the entanglement and to solve the internal problems of the State. It articulated thus: "the BJP realizes the magnitude of the challenge and dedicates

itself to the task of not only solving the internal problems of the State but also reclaiming the portion of our territory which has been illegally held by Pakistan for nearly five decades.<sup>23</sup>

The views of BJP on Kashmir issue discussed above, indicates that the party's approach has been radical in looking at the problem and prescribing solutions to deal with it. Like the Jana Sangh, the party's Hindu nationalistic dispositions may be one of the factors that might have been a major influence on its radical outlook. The idea that permanent solution to the problem lies in reclaiming the areas of Kashmir under the illegal occupation of Pakistan, implies that the party considers war as the most viable option to break the stalemate over Kashmir. Already both the countries have fought four wars centered round this issue and considering the socio-political and strategic antecedents in which the region is embedded, the possibility of another war cannot be declined. Contemplating the perils of the declared nuclear status of both, war may not be a sensible option. Hence it seems that it would be rational on the part of the two countries, to maintain status quo. A sagacious solution appears in the acceptance of the LOC as the permanent international border. This will also facilitate the promotion of socio-economic development in the region and help in establishment of political stability.

In its tenure as the leader of the coalition Government at the center, the BJP was involved in efforts to find an amicable and lasting solution to the Kashmir issue and restore normal relations between India and Pakistan. In this context the diplomatic initiatives and confidence building measures initiated by the BJP led government can be noted. The introduction of the bus service from Delhi to Lahore, the signing of Lahore declaration, the announcement of the unilateral cease fire in Kashmir for the month of Ramzan and its subsequent extensions, the Agra summit, Srinagar peace initiative of April 18th 2003 made by the then prime minister A.B. Vajpay, the special Diwali offer consisting of a set of 12 confidence building measures announced on October 12 2003 and finally the offer to start a bus service from Srinagar to Muzafferabad, which has materialized under the Congress led UP A Government. All demonstrates the attempts made by the BJP led coalition Government for bringing a peaceful solution to the Kashmir conundrum.

But even after all this, the deadlock in Kashmir continues and terrorist violence seems to be unrelenting. As a result, Kashmir issue remains kindled. In this regard it may be argued, neither in the opposition nor as the leader of the coalition, the party manage to discover viable options to deal effectively with the problem. Hari Singh comments: "neither the Congress leaders nor the opposition leaders have so far shown that they know how to deal with the situation. They have only been groping in the dark since 1947. Merely changing governors or political brokers does not constitute a policy or a strategy we did not have a policy in 1947 we do not have one today."<sup>24</sup> The BJP led coalition Government's Kashmir policy has been criticised thus: "Even the most articulate observer would find it difficult to elucidate New Delhi's Kashmir policy. Lacking a clear cut direction it has been a victim of confusion. The policy occasionally gets laced with bright patches which however do not take long to disappear owing to the

government's own lapses. Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's laudable bus journey to Lahore ended in the costly Kargil intrusions caused mainly by the government's intelligence failure. New Delhi's widely acclaimed ceasefire initiative has hitherto failed to yield any positive result.<sup>25</sup>

The inability of the BJP led coalition Government to explore pheasible alternatives for an amicable solution of the Kashmir entanglement renders its articulations and criticisms to be a sham. Thus it can be underlined that political parties must properly grasp the prevailing situation before commenting upon the government's policies towards an acute issue such as Kashmir. The goal of political parties in this regard must be more creative and contributory rather than critical or condemnatory.

#### Cross border terrorism

In the ambit of India Pakistan relations, terrorism is the most significant component that symbolizes serious domestic and international ramifications for both. Pakistan dubs terrorism in Kashmir as freedom struggle and has used it as subversive instrument of foreign policy through which it seeks to attain its goal of dismembering Kashmir from India. On the other hand for India terrorism has become a major security challenge that has pushed the stability and integrity of our nation state into shambles. The protracted dispute over Kashmir engraves in it, the genesis of terrorism in the Sub-continent. "Pakistan having failed to wrest Kashmir from India by means of direct armed conflict in 1947-48, 1965 and 1971, now opted for a low cost proxy war against India by sponcering terrorism in Jammu&Kashmir."<sup>26</sup>

Due to this complexities in India Pakistan relations has been intensified. Kargil crisis witnessed Pakistan's proxy war reach to its peak and after this event; the peace process was almost derailed. Although the process of constructive engagement has been revived, terrorism still remains as a major irritant in India Pakistan relations. "Terrorism has become one of the most complicated problems and it has adversely affected the relations between the two countries in the recent times. Infact, it has become one of the most pressing problems of foreign policy that required immediate and serious consideration and a resolution. The manner in which the partition of the subcontinent had taken place, a number of post independence problems had made the two countries to fight three wars. But the problem of terrorism that led to a low intensity conflict in which both countries have been engaged since the 80s has further deteriorated their relations."<sup>27</sup> Its latest and ugliest manifestation can be seen after the "July 11 terrorist strikes in Mumbai and the finger pointing by India at Pakistan."<sup>28</sup> Leading to the cancellation of the foreign secretary level meeting scheduled to be held on 21 July 2006, resulting in a further drift in their diplomatic ties.

BJP alleged Pakistan of blatant interference in the internal affairs of India by sponsoring insurgency and terrorism. Primarily to cause internal destabilization, in order to advance its own obnoxious claims on Kashmir. The party observed: "some of India's neighbours interfere in our internal affairs with impunity. Pakistan aids and abets and directly takes part in promoting

terrorism in Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir. Pakistan instigates infiltration across our borders in Rajasthan and Gujarat.<sup>29</sup> Further the party reprobated Pakistan for extenuating its act of sponsoring terrorism on the pretext of protection of human rights of people of Kashmir and its subsequent attempts to internationalize Kashmir issue. The party commented: "no wonder Pakistan feels it can come to no harm by continuing to aid and abet the terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir. At the same time despite its dismal performance in Genoa at the annual session of the UN human rights commission, Pakistan has not abandoned its effort to internationalize the Kashmir question, in the guise of protection of the human rights of people of Kashmir."<sup>30</sup>

As an opposition, the party criticised successive Indian government's for not devising robust policies to tackle cross border terrorism patronized by Pakistan. It has condemned that successive Governments at the center have been ineffective in bridle the influx of terrorism into the Indian soil. It favoured the espousal of an aggressive policy to counter Pakistani sponsored terrorism, in the event of its Government not taking concrete steps to stem the spate of insurgency across Indian borders. The BJP notes: "The government of India has been unable to convince Pakistan that, there is a limit to India's patience. Half a decade of terrorism perpetrated in Kashmir should be enough to convince the government of India that, it cannot shirk its responsibility to the country. If Pakistan does not end its abetment to the terrorists soon, India will have to decide on what steps to take against Pakistan to curb its nefarious activities in Jammu and Kashmir."<sup>31</sup>

Right from the day BJP formed the Government at the center, it had assigned top priority to India Pakistan relations, in its security and foreign policy. The BJP led Government contended that the fundamental issue in the bilateral relations of the two countries is terrorism. Turning down the claims of Pakistan that Kashmir is the core issue, the Government had taken the position that any amicable solution to the ruffled relations between the two neighbours rests upon Pakistan ending its abetment to terrorists. It further had stated that any decision to hold dialogue with Pakistan or any peace initiative to normalize relations will be taken only after Pakistan takes solid and sustained measures to wipeout the scourge of terrorism. This position of the BJP led Government was reflected in the then prime minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's statements at various national and international forums. Addressing the United Nation's General Assembly, Mr. Vajpayee had asserted: "New Delhi would not dialogue with Islamabad as long as Pakistan continues to sponsor terrorism in Kashmir. Pakistan was using terrorism as a tool of blackmail and that just as the world has refused to negotiate with the Al-Qaeda or the Taliban, India too would not negotiate with terrorism. A dialogue would take place between India and Pakistan, only when cross border terrorism is stopped or was eradicated and then we can dialogue with Pakistan on the other issues between us."<sup>32</sup>

After visualizing the party's views on cross border terrorism, it may be noted here that although the BJP had severely criticised the non-BJP Governments for failing to curb terrorism, it is a paradox that even after it formed the Government at the center, it was unable to find concrete solutions to the problem. It appears that, political parties in the opposition are critical

of the policies of the government without a proper comprehension of the ground realities. Hence a prudent opposition must therefore be able to understand the situational compulsions under which policy decisions are made and involve in constructive criticisms so that quality of a government's policy is bolstered.

The BJP led Government's policies to counter terrorism were characterised by inconsistencies and there was dearth of firmness. The leaders of the BJP had boisterously advocated that, there will be no dialogue with Pakistan until it ends perpetrating terrorism from its soil. But paradoxically, the Government made a U turn and invited the Pakistani president for a summit at Agra and again it made a peace initiative in Srinagar. This indicates that the dynamics of domestic politics and the tumultuous character of international relations may compel the Government's policies to be vacillating. Hence for this no Government can be held for ransom. In view of this it may be argued that political parties should rise above partisan considerations and arrive at a common consensus regarding the appropriate measures to be adopted in order to deal with the vexed problem of terrorism.

#### **The nuclear factor in India Pakistan relations**

Attainment of a nuclear military posture by India and Pakistan has been considerably influenced by the military defeats they suffered at the hands of their neighbours. India's defeat at the hands of China in 1962 and Pakistan's defeat at the hands of India in 1971, compelled both the vanquished nations to bring structural alterations in their national security policies. In addition to this, Chinese nuclear tests in 1964 and India's nuclear tests, also had a phenomenal impact upon the psyche of the political class in India and Pakistan respectively. India's nuclear tests haunted Pakistan in the same manner as Chinese nuclear tests did for India.

After India's conventional military superiority was demonstrated in the war of 1971 The ruling establishment in Pakistan came to the conclusion that a favourable solution to the disputes with India can be achieved only by developing a credible nuclear capability. So as to counter the conventional military superiority of India. The nuclear testing by India in 1974 at Pokhran, braced Pakistan's beliefs and it became a serious challenge to its policy makers. The urge for the procurement of nuclear weapons capacity was deeply embedded in the psyche of Pakistani leadership. Pakistan's prime minister Z A Bhutto went to the extent of stating: "If India developed an atomic bomb, we too will develop one even if Pakistanis have to eat grass or leaves or to remain hungry, because there is no conventional alternative to the atomic bomb."<sup>33</sup>

Writing about the roots and dimensions of Pakistan's nuclearisation Steve Weissman and Herbert Krosney argue: right from the mid 1950s Zulfikar Ali Bhutto when he became a minister in Ayub Khan's cabinet, was an advocate of Pakistan developing nuclear weapons. Pakistan's defeat in 1971 strengthened Bhutto's conviction. He took the decision that Pakistan should have a nuclear weapons capacity, two years before India's 1974 tests in Pokhran. His articulated logic was that Pakistan should have such a overwhelming superiority in non

conventional weapons that India would never be able to defeat Pakistan in conventional warfare."<sup>[34]</sup> By and large it can be stated that Pakistan's nuclearisation was fundamentally Indo-centric.

On the other hand, the motives for India's nuclearisation were quite dissimilar to that of Pakistan. It mainly emanated out of the hostile environment around its neighbourhood due to the presence of a declared nuclear power China and Pakistan with a covert nuclear weapon's capability. What was worse, both of its neighbours fostered a belligerent security and foreign policy that was demonstrated in the breach of its territorial integrity once by China and thrice by Pakistan. This may have compelled India's policy makers to evolve a nuclear security policy. The restrictive and discriminatory international regimes governing the possession of nuclear capabilities such as the CTBT and NPT might have also catalysed India's nuclear motivations. The ultimate culmination of the nuclear endeavours of India and Pakistan, manifested in the nuclear testing by both the countries in 1998. The declared nuclear status of the two subcontinental rivals added a new irritant in their bilateral relations. In addition to this, Kashmir issue also seems to have attained a critical dimension.

The genesis of BJP's views on nuclear issue in Indo-Pakistan relations can be traced in the ideas of some of the leaders of its predecessor the Jana Sangh. They were of the opinion that the nuclear environment in India's neighbourhood, the declining security situation in the region and the strong undercurrents of cold war politics governing the affairs of South Asia after Pakistan's military alliance with the US, constrains India to attain a credible nuclear capability for the protection of its national interest.<sup>"[35]</sup> They argued that India's prestige and national security depended upon nuclear weapons.<sup>"[36]</sup> "In the 1970s, Jana Sangh was one of the most vocal pro-bomb party."<sup>[36]</sup> A B Vajpayee the then Jana Sangh leader ardently advocated that India's security and strength lies in its nuclear capabilities. "India exploded its first nuclear device in May 1974. Vajpayee was among the first to extol the decision."<sup>"[37]</sup>

As already indicated like the Jana Sangh, China and Pakistan are deeply ensconced in the national security perception of the BJP. The party held the view that China's declared nuclear weapon status and Pakistan's covert endeavour for attaining nuclear weapons capability and their apparent adversarial relations with India, justifies a more hawkish nuclear policy for the country aimed at achieving weapons capacity. Former BJP president L.K. Advani had asserted: "So far as the BJP is concerned it would like to reiterate that against the background of China and Pakistan having become nuclear powers, national security warrants that India too must develop a nuclear deterrent of its own."<sup>"[38]</sup>

This was also the party's popular agenda. The 1996 election manifesto declared that "The BJP will re-evaluate the country's nuclear policy and exercise the option to induct nuclear weapons."<sup>"[39]</sup> BJP's prioritization of a national security policy based upon nuclear deterrence emanates from its conviction that Pakistan had nuclear weapons capability prior to that of India and it was perilous for the latter's security and territorial integrity. It declared: "Pakistan's nuclear aspirations carry within them dangerous portents for a serious destabilization of the

strategic balance in the subcontinent."<sup>40</sup> Hence as an opposition it strongly urged the Government to adopt a more hawkish nuclear policy. The party indicated: "Pakistan is now a nuclear weapons State and this fact changes the military equation in the Hindustan peninsula. The Government of India must take any and all measures including the exercise of the nuclear option to meet Pakistan's challenge to India's territorial integrity."<sup>41</sup>

The profound security threat perception of the BJP, might have propelled the party when it came to power as the leader of the coalition government at the center in 1998 to exercise the country's nuclear option and conduct nuclear test at Pokhran: There was an animated nation wide debate over whether or not the BJP led coalition government should have taken the unprecedented step of crossing the nuclear Rubicon & terminating the established nuclear ambiguity maintained by the previous Government's. Unlike the 1974 tests were in the Congress government claimed that, they were done for peaceful purposes. The BJP led coalition government candidly declared that, the tests were conducted to demonstrate India's credentials in nuclear technology and its use for defence and strategic purposes. The primary contention of the BJP led coalition government was that conducting nuclear tests were essential to give India a valid choice to retort the geo-strategic threats posed to India in the prevailing nuclear environment in the region. Indicating the motivations behind the tests, senior BJP leader and the then prime minister A.B. Vajpayee noted: "The Government was faced with a difficult decision. The touchstone that has guided us in making the correct choice here was national security. These tests are a continuation of the policies set into motion that put this country on the path of self-reliance and independence of thought and action."<sup>42</sup>

But it appears that the BJP led coalition government exaggerated upon its stance. No doubt the long drawn security threat perceptions of India with regard to its hostile neighbours Pakistan and China is apparent and it was amplified when the two acquired nuclear capabilities. But the prospects of Pakistan or China using nuclear weapons against India seems to be bleak, simply because of the devastating effects of such an adventure, not only upon whom it is used but on the user also. Hence the claims of the BJP led coalition government that threats to India's security lured them to conduct the tests, does not gain much ground. Apart from this time has shown that existence of nuclear weapons has not proved to be critical or contributory for the security situation in South Asia. "In the more than five years since India and then Pakistan in that order declared themselves nuclear weapon States, there has been no evidence that the acquisition of nuclear arms has strengthened security in South Asia."<sup>43</sup> Condemning the nuclear tests, I.K. Gujral former prime minister stated in the Lok Sabha, "There was no security compulsion for performing the test."<sup>44</sup>

In the Indian polity the BJP has emerged as a formidable force and with this, the Indian political system witnessed a structural transformation from a one party dominant system to a multi party system. In the course of its ascendancy to the pinnacle of political power, the party attempted to use its Hindu nationalist ideological foundations to widen its social support base especially in the subaltern levels of the Indian society. In this context Shaila Seshia

states: "in the 1991 Lok Sabha elections under the leadership of L K Advani the BJP presented itself to the electorate, as a flagrantly pro-Hindu party. It hoped that its Hindu nationalist platform would unite the Hindu community and expand BJP's support in the rural areas and among the lower caste."<sup>45</sup>

But transpiration of the BJP as the ruling party was coalesced by a qualitative metamorphosis in its character. After BJP came to power, it attenuated its strong Hindu nationalist ideological predilections. This fact gets credence if we notice its adaptability to form a coalition government with a number of parties which had divergent ideological propensities and did not share the Hindu nationalist ideological premises with the BJP.

Now the top leadership of the party is advocating that the members of the party must moderate their extreme Hindu nationalist proclivities. "at the parties April 1998 national executive meeting at New Delhi, Advani asked the party members to shelve the core idea of Hindutva, in the interest of producing a stable coalition Government."<sup>46</sup> The recent description of Jinnah as a secular leader by L.K. Advani in his visit to Pakistan is also an indication of the ongoing transformation in the basic character of the party.

BJP's views on Indo-Pakistan relations has also underwent qualitative transformation, after the party came to power. While in the opposition the party had presented very radical views on the basis of its Hindu nationalist foundations, similar to that of its precursor the Jana Sangh. But when the party formed the government heading a coalition at the center, slackening of its extreme views on various issues of Indo-Pakistan relations is visible. The various peace initiatives and confidence building measures launched by the BJP led coalition government since 1999, significantly, the introduction of Delhi Lahore bus service, the signing of Lahore declaration, unilateral ceasefire in Jammu&Kashmir, Sri Nagar peace initiative and the special Dewali offer can be cited in this regard. All this indicates that now the BJP is not in favour of bringing radical solutions to the contentious issues in Indo-Pakistan relations, on the other hand the inclination is towards resolving the disputes through dialogue.

Regarding the issue of Kashmir the BJP had held very extreme views, the party recommended for reclaiming those parts of the territory which are under the occupation of Pakistan. But now the senior leaders of the party in the BJP led coalition government

are complimenting the idea that, the pennant and rational solution to the Kashmir dispute lies in maintaining status quo and accepting the LOC as the pennant international border. On the whole the fundamental transfonnation of the parties views on Indo-Pakistan relations is visible in the fact that the Jana Sang had held the view that the pennant solution to the problems of Indo-Pakistan relations lies in the integration of the two countries, but disparate to this notion the leaders of the BJP are of the opinion that the geographical positions of India and Pakistan cannot be altered. This position of the BJP is highlighted in the statement of the senior leader of the BJP Mr. A.B. Vajpayee when he said that "history can be changed but not geography."<sup>47</sup>

Anyhow, the compulsions of operating a coalition Government and multi party competition, induced an inevitable transformation in the position of BJP on IndoPakistan relations. The party molded its views in such a way so as to facilitate its smooth accommodation into a coalition structure, in order to remain in power. Hence the attitude of the party on various issues has become more pragmatic in order to suit the needs of the present Indian political system. in other words the party's approach now seems to be based on considerations of real politic rather than ideological romanticism. "Thwarted by the logic of collective action and by a predominant party determined to avoid any sectarian division, Bharatiya Janata party's ascendancy was far from inevitable. It is the product of shrewd political maneuvering by the Bharatiya Janata party elite within a politico-economic environment that was ripe for change."<sup>48</sup>

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## INDIA'S FRANCOPHONE AFRICA POLICY : LENIENCY TO PARTNERSHIP

Vidhan Pathak

*There is comprehensive shift and changes in the foreign policy of India from the earlier decades of 1970s and 1980s in the 1990s. The 1990s have witnessed the rise of economic thrust in India's foreign policy. As a result, India's foreign policy has been increasingly driven towards finding export markets, attracting foreign capital and know-how. Francophone African countries had remained the unexplored part of India's economic strategy. However, the big leap in Indian thinking occurred in the 1990s when it stopped seeing these countries in terms of the old third world agenda of decolonisation and non-alignment. Issues such as disarmament and non-alignment that had brought the two regions together have taken a backseat in this era of globalisation. The recent Indian efforts were about plugging a huge gap in India's strategy of intensifying political and economic contact with these countries. Before the decade of 1990s, India doesn't have definite and clear-cut policy towards the Francophone African countries. They were broadly covered under the India's broader policy framework towards Africa continent as whole. Thus in nutshell they were more noticeable for their absence in Indian foreign policy considerations rather than partners in struggle. However in the 1990s with fast globalising world and the change in the ranks and profiles of India as well as Francophone African countries, Indian foreign policy has taken new initiatives to rope in them in its new drive for economic and strategic cooperation to achieve the developmental goals. More precisely, the quest for African energy and to gain their strategic support in various world forums like UN and WTO and other international organizations besides the vast untapped economic potential of these countries have driven Indian foreign policy strategists to emphasis on stronger relations with these countries. As a result initiatives like Team-9, Focus Africa, Agricultural Development Projects, Line of Credits (LoC) facilities and investments in Energy sector by OVL are already in place.*

### Introduction :

India and Africa are neighbours across the Indian Ocean. The continent of Africa has a special place in the national political consciousness of India over decades. India extended moral and material support to the African liberation movements in their struggle for freedom and to realize their human and political rights. India's abhorrence for all forms of discrimination, support to African liberation movements and independent countries of that continent lies rooted in the strong historical and emotional links that binds India to Africa. The historic role of Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa, India's consistent support to the liberation struggle and anti-apartheid campaign laid the firm foundations of the India's Africa policy. The increasing cooperation between India and the Francophone African countries in all fields is due to India's historical affinities and innate sympathies with the aspirations of the people of the Francophone Africa and equally innate desire to assist the development of their personality in all ways possible. India has welcomed the opportunities emerging from the wide-ranging political and economic changes taking place throughout the Francophone Africa which when viewed in conjunction with India's own changing profile, provide a functional framework for a new and purposeful engagement between India and the Francophone African countries in the common endeavour to exploit for mutual benefit the complementarities of their skills and resources. India attaches priority to sustaining and rejuvenating its close and privileged relations with these countries. Building on

almost five decades of close political support and provision of technical assistance, India is now moving towards closer economic and trade relations with the countries of Francophone Africa in true spirit of South-South Cooperation. The current euphoria of India in Francophone Africa has acquired a new dimension with strong emphasis on strengthening trade and economic exchanges and a renewed focus on South-South Cooperation in the 1990s. However, the foundation for such cooperation definitely lies in the historical bondage that India shares with the continent of Africa. The goodwill and credibility of India among these countries has its foundation on the historical role India played in the freedom struggle in the continent of Africa besides its growing economic strength in the 1990s.

#### India's Francophone Africa Policy: Historical Perspective

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the architect of Indian foreign policy, laid the firm foundation for India's Africa policy and the war against colonialism and racism formed, some of the basic ingredients of his early foreign policy. Nehru's during his visit to Brussels Congress in February 1927 met a number of African delegates and developed a feeling of commitment for Africa. During Nehru's period, Indian policy towards Africa was based on his personal commitment to the Afro-Asian resurgence and he gave a new life to the idea of Afro-Asian solidarity. Nehru like Gandhiji, believed that freedom of Indian should be a means of promoting the freedom of all oppressed people. He worked out a strategy of diplomacy and gave shape and direction to the country's foreign policy. Nehru, immediately after the independence, observed that the objectives of Indian Foreign policy were the preservation of world peace and the enlargement of human freedom. Thus, the evolution of Indian foreign policy that took place immediately after independence was informed with idealism and there was no dearth of issues for her to espouse. Nehru described the idealism of today as the realism of tomorrow. As a result of this idealism during the decade of 50s and 60s, India was among the most prominent countries, which had not only achieved independence but was also working for the independence of other countries.<sup>1</sup> In fact she has a creditable record of supporting liberation movements in Africa and the anti-apartheid struggle. It was natural for her to assume leadership role against colonialism and racism and thus she was in the forefront of the global struggle for decolonisation of Africa. India has been supporting the cause of African independence in various international forums. India was very active at the United Nations on these issues. In recognition of India's positive contribution, she was unanimously elected chairman of the UN special committee on decolonisation set up in 1961.<sup>2</sup> Thus during the initial period, India's policy towards Africa can be ascribe as India's firm commitment for decolonisation of African countries and struggle in South Africa to end the racial discrimination. For Nehru the emergence of Africa from colonial bondage to independence was a part of the continuum of Asian-African resurgence. The importance of Africa, he felt, arose from the fact that "though separated by the Indian Ocean from us, it is in a sense our next door neighbour."<sup>3</sup> He propounded the doctrine of non-alignment as a strategy of liberation in the post-colonial period. For him Africa was not a remote continent but "a neighbour across the Indian ocean."<sup>4</sup>

Thus, one of the major strands of his policy towards Africa was the support for the struggle against colonisation and the racial discrimination. Under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru, India was the founder member of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Nehru propounded the doctrine of non-alignment as a strategy of liberation in the post-colonial period at a time when the world was entering the period of cold war. As the cold war began, Nehru's principle of non-alignment appealed to the Africans, which they adopted after their independence.<sup>5</sup> The African acknowledged both Nehru's and Mahatma Gandhi's support for the African struggle. Mazrui says that Gandhi's message of non-violence and passive resistance inspired many black leaders in Africa including Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania.<sup>6</sup> However, towards the end of Nehru's tenure, India's relations dipped to a low with African countries. This was due to a number of factors. Firstly, India's hesitation in fixing a date for the end of colonialism in Africa, on the logic that it was unrealistic, at the Belgrade NAM Summit in 1961 made it look soft towards the colonial powers. Although in 1960s, India gave moral and diplomatic support to African liberation struggles, it was branded as one having softened attitude towards colonial powers. Indian insistence on non-violent struggles against colonialism, advocacy of peaceful co-existence and recall of Apa Saheb Pant from Kenya under British pressure shattered the high expectation of African nationalists and brought out the limitations of India support to African liberation struggles. The preference for peaceful path of struggle, priority for preservation and extension of area of peace which placed decolonisation at secondary level, absence of meaningful armed and material support of opposition to fix the date of colonial withdrawal all made Indian policy look timid and soft. Secondly, its insistence on African liberation movements to adopt peaceful means as opposed to China's overt gestures towards arms assistance was not appreciated. Thirdly, India's defeat in the Sino-Indian war in 1962 caused a setback to the image of India as a leader. Fourth, immediately after the 1962 war, India was busy countering China at every multilateral forum. However few African nations gave diplomatic support to India, bilaterally or at multilateral fora like NAM.<sup>7</sup>

Historically, India has identified with Francophone African countries in their anti-colonial struggles. Independent India's pursuit of the goal of freedom and self-government for all countries in Africa as well as Asia brought the French dominated territories in Africa within the general ambit of India's Africa policy. India consistently and constantly championed the cause of the political advancement of the African colonies of France in the UN Trusteeship Council and the UN committee on non-self governing territories.<sup>8</sup> However, India's anti-colonial pronouncements on the French imperialism were generally muted. This was partly because of the peculiar juridical status and constitutional evolution of the African colonies of France and partly because India was engaged in delegate negotiations with France for the transfer of sovereignty in respect of former French settlements in India.<sup>9</sup> However, the confidence of the Francophone African countries on India stems from the fact that India had always been in the forefront of all motions, actions and movements that pressed and aimed at the decolonisation of the African countries and doing away with "settler colonialism". India had initiated and chaired UN committees on decolonisation.

The declaration of Independence by the then French territories in August-September 1960, led by Ivory Coast was greeted by India with caution, probably as their juridical status was still uncertain. By August 1961, when the Francophone African states were celebrating the first anniversary of their independence, India was represented in almost every capital by a special envoy, though in most cases it was the head of the Indian mission in a neighbouring Anglophone country.<sup>10</sup> India has had cordial relations with these countries since their independence. However, with the independence of these countries, the rallying point between the two regions i.e. support to liberation struggles come to an end.

#### The Post Nehru Era: 1970s and 80s

By the mid 1960s, India undertook a serious reassessment of its policy in Africa and adopted some fresh initiatives. Indira Gandhi's African safari in 1964 was aimed at measuring the depth of African solidarity with India. Subsequently, India stopped treating African countries as bloc and become selective in its friendship. Prime minister Indira Gandhi took a personal interest in cultivating good relations with African liberation movements on a new footing. India, under Mrs. Gandhi also extended legal recognition to progressive African liberation movements. By the end of 1960s, India had tough politico-diplomatic task to overcome the growing differences in Indo-African state relations. By early 1970s there were many remarkable achievements by India at domestic front, which injected self-confidence in it. India won 1971 war with Pakistan liberating Bangladesh. Indian victory was decisive. It was able to stand against the combined threat of Pakistan, China and USA. The Sino-Soviet conflict and cold war had enabled India to sign 1971 Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with USSR resulting in her ability to ignore the threats of Kissinger and Seventh Fleet of USA. Indian diplomacy scored a point by obtaining the support of one super power against the other. The success of green revolution and achievement of self-sufficiency in food grains and production demonstrated Indian economic and managerial capability. Indian explosion of nuclear device restored its military confidence and raised its status as military power. The launching of Aryabhata again placed among leading scientific and technological countries of the world. Thus, by the 1970s, India's stature had risen in African eyes, the Indo-Soviet Treaty (1971), the 1971 war, the Green Revolution and the Peaceful Nuclear Explosion in 1974, probably contributed towards this change. The two major implications of these developments were that, one, India succeeded in arresting the reverse on the diplomatic front, which it was suffering since the Indo-Chinese war of 1962. With newly acquired self-confidence Indian policy became positive including towards African countries compared to 1960s when its major concern was to contain China and Pakistan. Secondly, for Africa India again became a power to turn for help and assistance and as model for development.

In the 1970s and 80s, India continued to support the liberation struggles in Africa. It worked closely with the Africans in the fight against apartheid in South Africa and Namibia, not just at the UN but also at other multilateral fora such as NAM and the Commonwealth. India had accorded diplomatic status to the African National Congress (ANC) in 1967 and SWAPO

(South West African People's Organization) in 1985.<sup>11</sup> In 1970 the UN General Assembly adopted the resolution on the right of the people of South Africa to end colonialism by "all means at their disposal" including armed struggle. This resolution was backed by India and it was a clear departure from its earlier insistence on peaceful decolonisation. India worked hard with Afro-Asian countries to get these resolutions passed. On 5 October 1976 the UN Committee against Apartheid was specially convened in New York to pay tribute to India for its crusade against Apartheid. On 5 October 1976 the United Nations Committee against Apartheid was specially convened in New York to pay tribute to India for its crusade against Apartheid. Delegates from all over the world showered praise on India for its principled stand against apartheid during last thirty years. Romesh Chandra, as the President of the peace council, made a significant contribution in promoting support to the ANC, and was honoured by the United Nations in 1982.<sup>12</sup> Besides providing diplomatic support for liberation struggles, India also started backing it with finance and material support. India provided financial and material aid to the liberation struggle in Africa, through multilateral institutions like the OAU, the UN Fund for Namibia, UN Educational and Training Programme for South Africa, and finally through the Action For Resisting Invasion, Colonialism and Apartheid (AFRICA) Fund. The AFRICA Fund was established by NAM under Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's leadership in 1986 and India made the first contribution of US \$40 million to the fund. In the next five years of its existence the fund rendered valuable assistance to the frontline states and the liberation movements in South Africa.<sup>13</sup> The visit of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to the four frontline states, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Angola and Tanzania in May 1986 was widely welcomed as a 'timely gesture of solidarity' with the frontline states and support for the relentless struggle against the apartheid regime in South Africa. Rajiv Gandhi and successive Indian Prime Ministers continued this policy. Earlier, India had provided financial and other assistance to ANC in 1967 to maintain its Asia mission in New Delhi. India gave the first major 'International honour' to Nelson Mandela the "Nehru Award for International understanding" in 1979.<sup>14</sup> Prime Minister V.P. Singh offered Nelson Mandela a cheque of US\$ 5 million and he was conferred the highest Indian award "Bharat Ratna" when he visited India after his release from jail. India also provided hundreds of scholarships and places in educational institutions to Africans. Few newer diplomatic initiatives like 'Award Diplomacy' and visit of Indian leaders to Africa were also taken during this period. All-important leaders of African countries were given one after another "Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding".

**India's Economic Diplomacy in Africa:** Since its independence, India based her foreign policy pronouncements on anti-colonialism, anti-racialism, non-interference in internal problems of other countries and for a free hand to build up economic base for the country. India wasted no time after becoming free to extend its support for the African cause through various international organizations. India extended its fullest support to all the African countries in their struggle for liberty, race-wise equality and for economic opportunities.<sup>15</sup> Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru since India's independence was trying to promote, in a modest way, economic stability of the African continent. With its limited resources, whatever little contribution India could make or is

making towards the well being of Africa, stemmed from India's genuine desire to strengthen the roots of their hard-won independence. In looking at India's economic assistance to Africa, Nehru's fundamental approach was that India should appear as a friend and ally and not as an exploiter. He was eager to share and exchange knowledge and experience. During the Nehru years of India's policy, the 'basics' of dismantling colonial mould were worked out.<sup>16</sup> The South-South Cooperation and Collective Self-Reliance was an important aspect of that policy thrust. Both for India and for Africa, Nehru prescribed the evolution of their own models of economic development. He was of the view that there could be no wholesale import of such models from the West. Each developing country must look into its own national conditions, genius and ethos. Nehru kept on emphasizing that India's friendly relations with the Africa should be strengthened through economic and technical cooperation. Even at that time Nehru realized that the economic cooperation among the developing countries was a must for the gigantic effort to overcome poverty, hunger and under-development. He was an advocate of North-South Cooperation, but he felt that economic self-reliance, meaning thereby South-South Cooperation, was more important for the developing world. Jawaharlal Nehru has been called the founder of the economic cooperation programme with the countries of Africa. India launched a policy of economic diplomacy in Africa and this was flagged off with the launch of the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme in 1964. This cooperation programme has, in fact, become a model of South-South Cooperation.<sup>17</sup> Nehru was aware that the complementarities and similarities between India and African social and economic conditions presented a tremendous scope for mutually beneficial cooperation. It was Nehru's foresight, which realized that what Africa needed most urgently was trained and educated manpower. He was aware that the educational facilities available in most African countries were meagre and they would not be able to build a trained, technical and bureaucratic infrastructure with their limited resources and training facilities. Thus, to encourage "people to people" cooperation the Indian government started sending small numbers of teachers, doctors, engineers and other professionals to Africa.<sup>18</sup> In historical perspective, South-South Cooperation was considered a must for the gigantic effort to overcome poverty, hunger and under-development in the Third World countries. It stands for safeguarding political independence, economic strength and collective self-reliance among the developing countries and to do away with the dependency syndrome.<sup>19</sup> Thus, with an urge for economic emancipation and democratization of international economic relations, the countries of the Third World raised the voice for a just and New International Economic Order (NIEO) during early 1960s. To this end, they initiated the North-South dialogue but that proved frustrating due to intransigence of the North. As a result, these countries had no option but to cooperate among themselves to avoid their exploitation by the North, to build up their sound economic foundation and also to develop their strong bargaining position vis-à-vis the North. Hence, they decided to enter into mutual dialogue for the South-South Cooperation for their economic emancipation and future prosperity.<sup>20</sup> These countries launched concerted efforts in the UN which led to the establishment of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) which held its first meeting in March 1964 and the Group of 77 also in 1964 which became the principal forum and instrument respectively of

the Non-Aligned countries in the UN for achieving the required changes in the international economic relations. The sixth special session of the UN General Assembly in 1974 adopted a 'Declaration of Programme of Action for the establishment of a New International Economic Order (NIEO), which envisages more active economic relationships among the developing countries.<sup>21</sup> Thus, the thrust for the mutual cooperation among the Third World countries has varying expressions, viz., NAM meets since 1955; UNCTAD meetings since 1964; the G-77 meetings since 1964; Technological cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC); Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries (ECDC); the G-15 meetings since 1990, SAARC, African Union, ECOWAS and so on.

Indian's economic diplomacy towards African states showed some changes with the changed domestic and International situation in the 1970s. Earlier Indian economic diplomacy was geared to achieve political objectives, to check Chinese and Pakistan influence in Africa and to end the diplomatic isolation of India in forums like NAM, Commonwealth, UN etc.<sup>22</sup> However, the growing industries and need to keep its balance of trade kept Indian economic diplomacy on forefront of its foreign policy. The economic diplomacy, which supported the political imperatives of 1960s, became the primary objectives by 1970s. Now political diplomacy started pushing the economic objectives under the umbrella of NAM and South-South Cooperation. Thus, India Africa policy acquired a new dimension from early 70s onwards. The increasing realization for need of cooperation among developing countries got articulated in various Indian and African diplomatic interactions by the early 1970s. In Lusaka Summit of NAM (1970), both African states and India underlined the need for economic cooperation among themselves. The resolution on 'Non-Alignment and Economic Progress' was separated from 14 other resolutions. The need for South-South Cooperation was realized. Thus the South-South Cooperation emerged as a challenge against the north-south dependence. NAM not only acquired a political dimension but also strong economic content over a period of time. The Group of 77, which consist mostly of the non-aligned countries, became an important instrument of negotiation and articulation of views of the developing countries in all fora where economic issues were discussed. India played an active role in strengthening the movement and making it an effective voice in representing the collective aspirations and interests of the developing countries on such vital issues as development, peace and stability.<sup>23</sup> Thus, emphasis on economic diplomacy increased in the early 1970s in tandem with the realization among developing countries in Asia and Africa of the need for economic cooperation among themselves. Adoption of Lagos Plan of Action by the OAU in 1980 underlined the importance given by the Africans to regional and South-South Cooperation.

In short, it can be stated that foreign policy of independent India had political goals to achieve, which meant that economic issues were at the back seat in the 1960s. Thus, the driving force for Indian economic initiatives in Africa during mid 60s was political. However, India acknowledged their developmental concerns and extended support and assistance to these countries. Thus with its ideological commitment to NAM and Afro-Asian resurgence and based

on its relative economic strength, India kept on pursuing her economic goals in this region. However in the 1960s, the call for South-South Cooperation could not become popular in Francophone Africa, because of the prevalent belief that massive injection of capital from France and other developed countries to this region would lead to their economic development. Even during the 1970s, the Indian government's talk of South-South Cooperation could not get encouraging response from this region. This happened as their hope for France aided development had not completely shattered. France had close socio-economic and military ties with Francophone African states and more than half of France's foreign aid flowed to these states. Under cold war conditions, political issues again took precedence over economic ones and Indian government's emphasis on South-South Cooperation in trade, technical and education and other matters did not yield required dividends. Thus, the South-South Cooperation, which was pursued by India from the early 1960s, did not find favour with these countries until the 1980s due to this optimism that France and other developed countries would help them to boost their economy. However, in the 1990s, this is no longer the case as they have realized that development of south lies in the hands of south. In today's globalised world this is the framework in which developing countries like India and Francophone African states could pursue their journey of growth and development to its logical end.

**India's Diaspora Policy in Africa :** The second important strand of Nehru's Africa policy was related to the people of Indian origin settled in Africa. However, there was change and continuity in India's policy towards Indian settlers in Africa. Nehru took the issue of discrimination against Indians in South Africa beyond the Commonwealth to the United Nations. During Nehru's Prime ministership when the question of racism in South Africa was taken up in the United Nations, it was only the case of discrimination against Indians in South Africa that was India's concern, though soon India had to change its policy to include black Africans also. The Indian approach of special support to Indians in South Africa lasted till the late 1950s. Till then the resolution of the INC used to articulate and strongly support the cause of Indians in South Africa though it used to express support to South African non-Indian sufferers also but in general terms.<sup>24</sup> However, A change in the Indian position occurred when the Indian government took the initiative in the United Nations and raised the question of discrimination of Indians in South Africa. The South African government argued that Indians were South African nationals and any treatment meted out to them fell under the domestic jurisdiction of that country. Besides this, the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act of 1946 also recognises that Indians were not aliens. Thus, the govt. of India also changed its position on the Indian questions and called it a racial issue. Once India raised the issue of South African Indian settlers in the United Nations based on the human rights clause, it soon realized that it could not keep the issue confined to Indian settlers. India extended support to all groups and communities subjected to racial discrimination in South Africa. Thus, there was a shift in the Indian approach and policy towards Indian settlers in South Africa. India started associating the discrimination of blacks and Indians together. The shift was explained by President of India, Rajendra Prasad in his address to parliament in 1952.

He said, "The question is no longer merely one of Indians in South Africa, it has already assumed a greater and wider significance. It is a question of racial domination and racial intolerance. It is a question of Africans more than that of Indians in South Africa."<sup>25</sup> While Nehru believed in cooperation between Indians and Africans but initially his sympathy and worry were also confined to Indians in South Africa. This contrasted with his general policy of Indian support to the combined struggle of Indian settlers and Africans in which the African cause was paramount. Nehru always stood for the primacy of Africans if their interest was to clash with Indian settlers. It is this duality between Nehru's policy for the change and continuity in Indian support to the African liberation struggle and Indian advice to Indians in Africa.<sup>26</sup> Nehru advised the Indians to identify themselves with the local community, adopt a more positive attitude towards the political aspirations of the people of their adopted countries. In economic matters, he advised them not to seek any special privileges at the cost of equal opportunities for the struggle.<sup>27</sup>

In fact, India was in a dilemma when it came to the Indians living aboard after 1947. India's foreign policy formulator Jawaharlal Nehru felt that India's foreign policy stood for independence from all foreign involvement with its focus on non-aligned and good relations with the developed as well as the developing nations especially the newly emerging Asian and African countries. And thus excluded a specific policy towards the overseas Indian community. The policy adopted by Nehru after independence in 1947, considered the overseas Indians as an external entity outside the purview of Indian domestic and foreign policy formulations. Nehru categorically advised his overseas Indians to integrate themselves within their host countries. Nehru was clear in enunciating his foreign policy goals that plainly stated that the Indians who had left their country of origin to seek employment abroad had to integrate with the local population, support their struggles for freedom and even put 'their cause first'. He pointed to their economic success in these countries where they were guests and stated that it was their turn to support their movements of political struggles. Though Nehru referred in his Republic Day addresses in 1960-62 of the 'mother country' and the position of the overseas Indians as ambassadors to the host countries. However, as slowly India became supportive of the decolonisation in Asia and Africa, it left the its Diaspora to fend for itself. India took little interest in overseas Indians. The past protestations of the plight of the indentured labourers and their terms of employment were soon forgotten. After independence, successive Indian governments adopted an attitude of studied indifference to the overseas Indians lest they should appear to be interfering in the internal affairs of another country. They were anxious not to appear as their protector or to encourage their return back to India nor to expose them to the suspicion of divided loyalty. Therefore, independence hardly brought any anticipated relief to the plight of overseas Indians in the British and French colonies as a consequence of the distinct Nehruvian policies of respecting national sovereignties, cultivating amicable international relations, non-interference into the affairs of other nations and the pursuit of non-alignment.

Compared to Nehru period Indian policy shifted regarding Indian settlers in Africa in the 70s. Indira Gandhi called them 'Ambassadors of India' and by end of 1970s she had unsuccessfully

tried to intervene in Kenyanisation. However, after the Indian experience in East Africa (Kenya and Uganda), she also endorsed the Nehruvian policy of non-interference and stressed on India's relations with the African nations first over her concern for the treatment meted out to the Indians in Africa. Some changes were also prevalent in the Indian policy towards its Diaspora during Janata government in 1977. These included rectification in the laws that would permit Indians living overseas to their motherland, even if they were foreign nationals. The government also organised a seminar and declared that the Indian Council of Cultural Relations would be involved with the Indian Diaspora. However, the issue of Indian settlers hardly had any important place in the Indian diplomatic and economic initiatives towards Africa during the 1970s and 80s. The government of India for almost four decades more or less followed the Nehruvian policy. The policy adopted under Nehru continued till the Rajiv Gandhi years. This policy of impatience towards the Indian Diaspora continued till the 1980s. Thereafter, a slow but steady transformation seems to have been set in motion so far as policy towards Indian Diaspora is concerned. The government of India in reality did not have a central machinery to deal with the Diaspora till the mid 1980s. The first time any special department or agency was mentioned was in 1986, when a special approval committee was constituted within the department of industrial development for the expeditious clearance of the industrial proposals of NRIs. Then in 1987, an Indo-NRI Chamber of Commerce and Culture was set up to promote the overseas Indian's cases. These measures were the result of an early phase of liberalisation in the 1980s. This the GOI hoped would fuel back some investments into the country, yet the procedures kept the NRIs out.

The evolution of India's Francophone Africa policy in the post-cold war period could be seen in the context of above historical developments. However, in the decade of 1990s, in the changing world conditions, the strategic, economic and political positions and equations between the countries make an obvious shift. And that is also true for the Indian foreign policy. The new feature of India's Francophone Africa diplomacy during 1990s is its emphasis on economic partnership with these countries.

#### **India's Francophone Africa Policy: Post-Cold War**

In the decade of 1990s, a unipolar world has been emerged with the collapse of the Soviet Union. The international economic as well as political and strategic environment has also undergone dramatic change. Globalization has become a force, which no country could ignore. In this fast globalizing world, India displayed the first signs of strategic assertiveness and a willingness to acquire national power and military power and not be apologetic about it, in the 1990s. India related events like India's nuclear weaponisation i.e. Pokharan II, India's Nuclear Doctrine, and India's response to Pakistan's adventure in Kargil indicate its growing strength and importance. Further India's economic liberalisation and its willingness for integration into the global economy reinforces this image. Thus, the four-decade-old domestic economic policy of India was reversed which has implications to foreign policy too. The new and continuing policy has meant opening up of the Indian economy to foreign economic competition. India launched itself on a definite

path of economic reforms, liberalization and greater integration with the global economy. The reversal of this old domestic economic policy has also brought about a significant shift in India's priorities in world affairs and its traditional diplomacy. India has practically abandoned its old active role in political developments and in favour of a higher priority for promoting international economic cooperation and consequently economic diplomacy.<sup>28</sup> Today, it is the experience of nations that a major content of foreign policy at bilateral and global level is economic arrangements. Every country is looking for some economic benefit or the other for itself. Thus, economic development has become the primary concern of Indian foreign policy. It is now more realistic and in the pursuit of national interest and is based on the recognition that India's place in the community of nations will be determined by the economic and military strength. Issues such as non-alignment and disarmament have taken a backseat in this era of globalization. In the recent years the Indian foreign policy has witnessed the rise of economic thrust. Economic diplomacy has been a key component of India's foreign policy. Apart from long established divisions in the ministry to deal with economic issues, an Investment Publicity Unit (IPU) was specifically set up in 1990 with a view to disseminating economic information and coordinating the economic and commercial activities of Indian missions abroad in the light of the economic reforms underway in the country. In the early Nineties, the Ministry of External Affairs annual reports reiterated that, "in the future, new relationships based on concrete economic, technological and educational cooperation will assume enhanced significance". Indeed, ever since economic liberalization in 1991, India's foreign policy has been increasingly driven towards finding export markets, attracting foreign capital and know-how. One aspect of Indian economic diplomacy has also been the promotion of South-South Cooperation. The Indian Economic and Technical Cooperation (ITEC) Programme, today extends to 110 countries in Asia, East Europe, Africa and Latin America and facilitates the training of as many as 1,000 foreign candidates in Indian institutions every year.<sup>29</sup>

In changed world scenario and due to recently liberalised and globalise economy, Indian foreign policy gives much importance to Western countries and developed nations. However, India's Francophone Africa policy has also undergone significant changes in the post cold war period. There has been a perceptible shift in its approach and attitude towards the problems of the Francophone African countries. The new feature of India's foreign policy is its emphasis on strengthened relations with African states. India has adopted several means of economic interaction with these countries, which include bilateral agreements, granting of credits and loans etc. High-level visits from India, study cum business tours organised by institutions like the ASSOCHAM, CII, FICCI, FIEO etc and government representatives have opened up new vistas of cooperation in the trade and industrial ventures. India has taken a large number of initiatives by way of visits by senior experts, policy makers and diplomats to some of the important Francophone African countries. Under ITEC and SCAAP, the Indian government has send technical assistance worth US\$ 2 billion to Africa. The launching of IOR-ARC, India-Africa Interest Group, TEAM-9, Focus Africa etc shows that the Indian foreign policy in context of Africa is on move. India launched an integrated "Focus Africa" programme from the year 2002-

2003 to enhance its trade with the Sub-Saharan African region. The Focus Africa programme focuses on Sub-Saharan African region with added emphasis on seven major trading partners of the region viz. Nigeria, South Africa, Mauritius, Kenya, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Ghana.<sup>30</sup> In fact, the scope of this programme was further extended with effect from 1st April 2003 to all the other countries of the Sub-Saharan African region, where India has diplomatic missions. Thus, the programme in effect, covers the entire African continent. Under this programme, the Government of India extends assistance to exporters, Export Promotion Councils, etc. to visit these countries, organise trade fairs and invite African trade delegations to visit India. The initiatives taken under this programme have received an encouraging response from the Indian exporting community. It is likely to boost bilateral trade with African countries in the coming years.

In continuation of its broader Africa policy, India has also made efforts to strengthen political understanding and expand economic cooperation with the countries of Francophone West Africa.<sup>31</sup> India's recent opening to the countries of Francophone West Africa has consolidated with the progress in bilateral relations with the countries like Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Mali and Togo.<sup>32</sup> A wide-ranging political dialogue with several key countries in the region also displays a considerable degree of understanding of India's security interests.<sup>33</sup> India's search for political influence and new sources of energy has washed up the remote shores of Francophone West Africa where New Delhi's foreign policy reach has been notable for its absence. This region has become an important source of hydrocarbons for the world and India in the recent years. In the coming decades, India along with China is going to become the largest consumer and importer of petroleum products. American oil companies are making beeline to the region and Chinese oil companies are already in Africa. India does not want to be left behind. India's ONGC Videsh has already made investment in Ivory Coast. Energy diplomacy therefore is important component of Indian foreign policy towards this region. Considering the potential that this region offers and insignificant Indian presence in that market, India launched 'Team-9 initiative' in March 2004. The 'Team-9 initiative' is expected to diversify sources of India's energy security. The endeavour was to put these countries and India together in an economic cooperation framework. Thus, India's Team-9 initiative point to a renewed focus on the region, which offers a huge strategic potential. The Government of India provided concessional credit facilities (LOC) of US\$ 500 million for financial assistance for the various projects and schemes identified for implementation under this regional cooperation mechanism. The Government of India also offered access to training resources in India and facilitate deputation of Indian scientists, technologists and other experts. In terms of multilateral diplomacy, these countries have always been important. They form a very important voting bloc in global forums. India is seeking their support in its candidature for permanent membership of UN Security Council, in WTO and other international organizations. Given their membership of several multilateral fora such as G-15, G-77, NAM and their common endeavour to set up a just and equitable world order, the renewed contact at the highest political level underlines the need for strategic consultations between them. Thus, India has now turned to Francophone West Africa so far neglected in Indian foreign policy considerations.

The Indian foreign policy has been shifted to forge beneficial economic relations with these states. In fact, Indian foreign policy makers are looking forward to identify common areas of understanding and mutual benefits in the fields of economy, politics and strategy with these countries. They are conscious that friendship with this large bloc of African countries will be of considerable value in the future. With the focus on Francophone West African region, the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India appointed a Joint Secretary for West African region in the 1990s. These countries are now receiving greater attention in India's foreign policy consideration with the establishment of a high-level inter-ministerial coordination board for the sub-region.<sup>34</sup>

The wave of globalisation in the 1990s also compelled India to revise its policy for the Indian Ocean region. Since the early 1990s, India has demonstrated its keenness to engage the littoral states, regional powers as well as the great powers in its security strategy for the region. She has sought to enhance the economic cooperation with Francophone Western Indian Ocean Islands. The readiness to shed the ambiguities of the non-alignment era and willingness to enter into strategic dialogues with those so interested with India has set the stage for cooperation with France in the Indian Ocean region. Now engagement is the key word of India's Indian Ocean policy in contrast to the cold war policy of isolation. This engagement has been beneficial in terms of deepening India's economic and security links with the Francophone Western Indian Ocean region. It has helped to remove wide spread doubts and apprehensions about India's political motivations in the region. Thus, shift in Indian policy has created new openings for cooperation with Francophone Western Indian Ocean Islands in the Indian Ocean region.

Francophone African countries have consciously embarked upon economic reforms and political liberalization. These developments have important implication for their relations with India. Change in the perception began in the early 1990s. India is conscious that a new Africa is coming into being, free, economically vibrant and politically representative. African leaders have prepared a vision for Africa in 21st century. Reform oriented African leaders have crafted the 'New Partnership for Africa's Development' (NEPAD). India is seen as a reliable partner in helping this vision. The prospects offered by this partnership and the vast potential for sustainable progress inherent in African initiative show that there is room for countries like India, to share and be part of this new dynamism. India has emerged today as a key global player. There are today large number of Indians in information technology and other fields who are making investments in the European Union. There are technologies, which India can transfer to other countries given its strength in knowledge industry. It is being increasingly recognized that India has excellent technology with this respect, which India commands, it should be possible for India to be of greater help for the developing world and stand shoulder to shoulder with the developed nations. One important strength apart from IT and knowledge industry which India has acquired over the last decade or so, is the emergence of the Indian Diaspora and the political influence they enjoy in various countries.<sup>35</sup> Although this factor is absent in its relations with

Francophone West African states but certainly it is important factor in its relations with Francophone Western Indian Ocean states like Mauritius, Madagascar and Seychelles.

India's Diaspora policy has also demonstrated a change during 1990s. Since early 1990s, there has been a proactive interest of Indian government in the overseas Indians. The Indian policy changed significantly with regard to this segment during 1990s. The submission of the L.M. Singhvi Committee Report on PIOs (People of Indian Origin) and NRIs (Non-Resident Indians) on 8 January 2002 may be looked at as the most important embodiment of this change in outlook and approach. The government has undertaken initiatives like celebration of Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas and the creation of a separate Ministry for Overseas Indians in the light of the recommendations of the L.M. Singhvi Committee Report. The Indian government now stood for active and overt association of the PIOs for foreign policy objectives of India. India wants to promote its economic interests and it has become paramount in Indian foreign policy. When the liberalization process started in early 1990s, the government of India tried to rope in first the NRIs and then the Indian settlers abroad to attract foreign direct investment. The PIOs are important and relevant overseas segment to be roped in India's new drive for strengthen bilateral relations with Francophone African countries.

The other aspect of Indian foreign policy currently is the phenomenon of regionalism. In order to establish a multi-polar world, smaller countries in the world are getting together and evolving themselves not merely into economic groups but also acquiring a political personality. India's policy is to promote a strong regional cooperative group and to promote friendly relations with all groups of countries, which have organized themselves regionally. The African union is a recent phenomenon, which seeks to bring together nations of the African continent. India is trying to forge relations with the African groups and has evolved a policy to deal with these regional groups.<sup>36</sup> In this effort, economic diplomacy will be India's principal tool. India is trying to evolve free trade arrangements with Africa. Trade and South-South Cooperation will continue to play a very important role in India's policy framework. India is not merely looking at investments from other regions and countries, developed or developing. It is also in a position to contribute them. There is considerable potential for economic and commercial cooperation, for promoting small-scale industries in Africa with technological support from India. India has initiated several economic arrangements with the countries of Africa. These include India's membership of the African Development Bank, credit arrangements, several bilateral agreements concluded in the fields of trade and assistance under ITEC programme etc. India is also involved in constructing relations of partnership and cooperation with regional African organization like SADC, COMESA, ECOWAS, UNCCA, African Development Bank etc.

India is committed to multi-plurism. It is not in favour of uni-polarity and therefore the kind of world order, which India envisage and is working for, is not one merely of technical equality in the United Nations but greater balance among Nations of the world. India is working for a better world order in the economic sphere. India is trying to coordinate activities with other developing

countries in order to be able to deal with the enormity of the inequality, which exists in the world today and create an environment, which is more equitable. India has played an active role in the deliberations of the United Nations on the creation of a more equitable international economic order. It has been an active member of the G-77 and later the G-15. Other issues, such as environmentally sustainable development and the promotion and protection of human rights have also been an important focus of India's foreign policy in international forums.<sup>37</sup> The other impact of multi-polarity would be in the security area and in all the arrangements internationally, which govern nuclear weapons, missiles, high technology etc. India has been consistently of the view that world cannot have two categories of countries.

India's diplomatic vision extends to embrace the interests of Africa as a whole, particularly in the priority area of economic progress and development. Such an economic congruence is facilitated by a broad agreement between India and the countries of Africa on their vision of a new world order characterized by peace, justice and equity, and fully responsive to the needs and interests of the developing world.<sup>38</sup> Thus, the government of India continued its policy of consolidating the gains of almost five decades of close ties of friendship with the countries in the Africa. Francophone African countries are currently engaged in the simultaneous processes of economic reform and political democratisation. These processes, being in line with India's own national priorities, have strengthened its capacity to identify itself with the aspirations of the people of Francophone Africa and to engage with them in a constructive programme of mutually beneficial cooperation.<sup>39</sup> As an emerging power, India is ready to play a growing role in Francophone Africa. Francophone Africa provides India with its growing need for markets and new sources of raw materials. For a variety of reasons, these countries are important for Indian foreign policy consideration. Firstly, at the level of diplomacy, cultivation of friendly relations to gain support in various international fora for policies, vital to India's national interest, is important for India's foreign policy. Secondly, Francophone Africa economically provides vast scope for mutually beneficial trade and commercial linkages in the spirit of South-South Cooperation. The imperatives of India's liberalized and globalize economy makes it necessary that third world countries and their markets are more seriously explored. The need for expanded export market and the challenge of the developed and industrialized economies should induce India to develop closer ties with these countries. Thirdly, India has a stake in NAM, G-77, G-15 and also Africa etc. It has also interest in WTO and restructuring UN, which needs partnership and cooperation with these countries. Thus, the quality and depth of Indo-Francophone Africa bilateral relations assume even greater significance and a broader canvas of empathy and support.

**Conclusion :** There is comprehensive shift and changes in the foreign policy of India from the earlier decades of 1970s and 1980s in the 1990s. The 1990s have witnessed the rise of economic thrust in India's foreign policy. As a result, India foreign policy has been increasingly driven towards finding export markets, attracting foreign capital and know-how. Before the decade of 1990s, India doesn't have definite and clear-cut policy towards the Francophone African

countries. They were broadly covered under the India's broader policy framework towards Africa continent as whole. Thus in nutshell they were more noticeable for their absence in Indian foreign policy considerations rather than partners in struggle. However in the 1990s with fast globalising world and the change in the ranks and profiles of India as well as Francophone African countries, Indian foreign policy has taken new initiatives to rope in them in its new drive for economic and strategic cooperation to achieve the developmental goals. More precisely, the quest for African energy and to gain their strategic support in various world forums like UN and WTO besides the vast untapped economic potential of these countries have driven Indian foreign policy strategists to emphasis on stronger relations with these countries. As a result initiatives like Team-9, Focus Africa, Agricultural Development Projects, Line of Credits (LoC) facilities and investments in Energy sector by OVL are already in place. It is evident now that India is giving as much importance to Francophone Africa as was expected. Commensurate with national interests and security, the improvement of bilateral relations is an important component of any foreign policy and India has succeeded in establishing a network of mutually beneficial relations with the Francophone African countries. As the U.S., Europe and China step up their diplomatic activism in these countries, India cannot afford to stay away from a friendly and inviting economic space next door. India needs to develop a more sustained political effort if it wants to stay at the front in an area of great strategic significance. A sense of common cause and a shared future is an unbreakable link between India and Francophone African countries which will extend to facing the new and emerging challenges confronting them in the new millennium.

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## AUTHENTICITY AND DERIVATIVENESS : DEBATING NEHRUVIAN SECULARISM

Vinny Jain

*Secularism in India is a multivocal word. What it means depends upon who uses the word and in what context. This paper is an attempt to analyze the issue of secularism in India in the context of two discourses-The Derivative Discourse and the Authenticity Discourse. The Derivative Discourse, Derivative in that it draws its philosophical underpinnings from the Enlightenment and is manifested in Western notions of modernity is represented here by Jawaharlal Nehru. The Authenticity Discourse, critiquing Nehru, and based on an understanding of the traditional, authentic socio-religious systems of South Asia, is represented by T.N. Madan and Ashis Nandy. This is an attempt to find possible answers to a basic query-why has secularism run into such difficulty in India? The Paper is in three parts. The first part deals with Nehruvian vision of secularism-the Derivative Discourse. The second part, deals with the Authenticity Discourse, T.N. Madan and Ashis Nandy. The third part is by way of possible answers/alternatives.*

I

The ideology of secularism was born of the Enlightenment. The word secularization was first used in 1648, at the end of the 30 years war in Europe, to refer to the transfer of Church properties to exclusive control of the Princes. What was a matter of fact statement then became later, after the French Revolution, a value statement as well. On 2nd November 1789 Talleyrand announced to the French National Assembly that all ecclesiastical goods were at the disposal of the nation, as indeed they should have been. Still later, when George Jasab Holyoak coined the term "secularism" in 1851 and led a rationalist movement of protest in England, secularization was built into the ideology of progress.<sup>1</sup> Secularization is nowadays generally employed to refer to, in the words of Peter Berger, "the process by which sections of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols."<sup>2</sup> It is widely accepted that Secularism advocates the separation of politics from religion, the religious from the temporal a separation of that which is Christ's from that which is Ceaser's.

It follows that an adequate theory of secularism must answer atleast three questions-first is it possible to separate religion and politics? Second, why must religion be separated from politics? And third, how after separation must the two relate to each other?

By intellectual preference Nehru's concept of secularism was shaped in the context of the rational western Enlightenment ideal. He was against institutional religion, ritual and mysticism and did not consider himself a religious person. He was not however uninterested in spiritual matters. Any impressions of his boyhood experiences of Brahmanical belief were erased by the powerful impact of his fathers personality and later, by his reading of the works of Karl Marx, Bertrand Russell and other similar thinkers.<sup>3</sup> BR Nanda has described Motilal Nehru as a "product of the late Victorian free thinking rationalism, which was learning to dispense with divine explanations of the working of the universe and to pin faith in the human intellect and on science to lead mankind along vistas of progress"<sup>4</sup> Henry Sender<sup>5</sup>, describes the composite culture of the Kashmiri Pandit community of the United Provinces, of which the Nehrus' were distinguished members, and the personal unorthodoxy of Motilal Nehru. He also quotes from Motilal Nehru's presidential address to the Congress of Calcutta in 1928 "(The) association (of religion) with politics has been to the good of neither, Religion has been degraded and politics has sunk to the mire. Complete divorce of one from the other is the only remedy".<sup>6</sup>

Jawaharlal's mothers' "attachment" to Hindu scriptures, pujas, orthodox ritual and pilgrimages<sup>7</sup>, meant that he grew up in a divided home. Later, Jawahar's political world too, like his home was a divided one with Gandhi taking the place of his mother as it were and insisting on the validity and indispensability of religious values. Gandhi's influence however never succeeded in erasing the earlier and deeper influence of Motilal.<sup>8</sup>

Nehru's reading of World History and his encounters with the Indian masses in the 1920s and 30s made him feel very negative about the role of religion in human affairs and he looked forward to a secularized society. He was a self confessed agonistic who subscribed to a rationalist and even a historicist worldview.

Gandhi's religiosity, to put it mildly, puzzled and annoyed Nehru, it caused him to write, in his Autobiography, one of his clearest and most mature statements on the subject of religion. Referring to the anguish that the news of Gandhi's fast (in Sept. 1932) on the subject of separate electorates had caused him while he was in prison, Nehru wrote-

"I felt angry with him at his religious and sentimental approach to a political question, and his frequent references to God in connection with it"

He further observed-

"India is supposed to be a religious country above everything else... (and yet, I have frequently condemned (religion) and wished to make a clean sweep of it. Almost always it seemed to stand for blind belief and reaction, dogma and bigotry, superstition and exploitation and the preservation of vested interests"<sup>9</sup>.

Indian religiosity weighed on Nehru's mind, though he refused to be unduly worried about it. It was more a nuisance than a problem. In 1920 he had declared : "if religion or rather

what is called religion, in India, continues to interfere with everything, then it will not be a mere question of divorcing it from politics, but of divorcing it from life itself."<sup>10</sup> The Gandhian imperative of religion as a guide to all, even the "tiniest activities", was not what Nehru believed in. As for the Gandhian notion of divine grace, Nehru considered the idea of a personal God very odd<sup>11</sup> He had an implicit confidence in the process of secularization. Proclaiming this confidence in his presidential address to the Lahore (1929) session of the Congress he said:-

"I have no love for bigotry and dogmatism in religion and I am glad that they are weakening, nor do I love communalism in any shape or form... I know that the time is coming soon when these labels and appellations will have little meaning and when our struggle will be on the economic basis."<sup>12</sup>

Two years later – in fact again and again during the next two decades he reaffirmed the primacy of the economic factor – "the real thing to my mind is the economic factor if we lay stress on this and divert public attention to it we shall find that automatically religious differences recede into the background and a common bond unites different groups. The economic bond is stronger than even the national one"<sup>13</sup> These words underlined Nehru's secular position and his socialist convictions.

This same train of thought was given considered expression in *The Discovery of India* (written in prison during 1944). Nehru wrote:-

"The belief in a super-natural agency which ordains everything has led to a certain irresponsibility on the social plane, and emotion and sentimentality have taken the place of reasoned thought and inquiry. Religion though it has undoubtedly brought comfort to innumerable human beings and stabilized society by its values, has checked the tendency to change and progress inherent in human society."<sup>14</sup>

Given this position it is no wonder that Nehru was dismissive of the Hindu-Muslim problem. "The question does not exist for us at all"<sup>15</sup>, he declared. In the Presidential address of the Lucknow Congress (1936) he said,

"I am afraid I cannot get excited over the communal issue, important as it is temporarily it is after all a side issue and it can have no real importance in the scheme of things".<sup>16</sup>

Out of prison in 1945 Nehru faced a rapidly changing political situation and much to his chagrin, the "side issue" moved fast to occupy the centre of the stage. He was disbelieving and appalled "to think in terms of Pakistan when the modern trend is towards the establishment of a world federation is like thinking in terms of bows and arrows as weapons of war in the age of the atomic bomb".<sup>17</sup>

Yet the country was partitioned on the basis of religion.

Nehru's position on religion, religious conflict and the significance of the processes of

secularization was what would be called rationalist and modern, whether one sees it derived from Marxian or Lockean roots. It was also idealist in the sense that it reflected more the ideals of the European Enlightenment than the hard facts of society, culture and politics in India.

Eleven years after independence and eight years after the adoption of the Constitution, Nehru was visited by Andre Malraux in Delhi and asked what his greatest problem had been during his years of power. Nehru replied, "Creating a just state by just means" and, after a pause, "Perhaps, too, creating a secular state in a religious society"<sup>18</sup>, and again in 1961, just 3 years before his death he writes- "we talk of a secular state in India. It is perhaps not very easy even to find a good word in Hindi for secular... some people think it means something opposed to religion. That obviously is not correct... it is a state that honors all religions equally and gives them equal respect."<sup>19</sup>

The chasm between Nehru on the one hand and Gandhi and Radhakrishnan on the other was deep. For Gandhi religious pluralism entailed inter-religious understanding and mutual respect, it was the strength of Indian society while communal politics tied to Statism would be its bane. For Nehru however, religiosity and the attendant conflicts were the badge of social backwardness. Secularism in the sense of neutrality as state policy was an attempt to cope with a difficult situation. And the state was potentially a very important instrument of public welfare and social advancement, very much on the lines that J.S. Mill and other liberals and advocated.<sup>20</sup>

Nehru's Post Enlightenment rationalism gave to him the primacy of the scientific method and the scientific approach to life; this was particularly manifest in his insistence that the economic question had the primacy in all social questions. This he believed to be the 'modern' way of looking at history and society.

Thus, for example, that ubiquitous problem of 'communalism'- which has consistently dogged Indian nationalism in the 20th century. In theory, the problem as Nehru saw it was simple enough, the fundamental political requirement was the legal guarantee of full and equal rights of citizenship, irrespective of religious, linguistic or other cultural differences. That was the basic liberal premise on which individual civil rights would be established. In addition, there had to be a consideration of welfare or social justice.

"Every effort should be made by the state, as well as by private agencies to remove all invidious social and customary barriers which come in the way of the full development of the individual as well as any group, and that educationally and economically backward classes should be helped to get rid of their disabilities as rapidly as possible. This applied especially to the depressed classes. It was further laid down that women should share in every way with men in the privileges of the citizenship".<sup>21</sup>

It was true of course that the colonial state was hardly interested in providing these conditions for the full growth of the citizenship. It was an external political force, intervening in the political conflicts in India in order to further its own particular interests, and therefore 'playing off' one side against the other by distributing special privileges on a sectarian basis. But that was all the more reason to conclude that a solution to the communal problem required, as a first step, the elimination of the colonial state and the creation of a true national state.

But once there premises of the national state were granted, there could not exist a 'communal' problem any more. The only problems which would then be real would be economic ones.

"Having assured the protection of religion and culture etc., the major problems that were found to come up were economic ones which had nothing to do with a person's religion. Class conflicts there might well be, but not religious conflicts, except in so far as religion itself represented some vested interest."<sup>22</sup>

Yet, while this might be clear enough from a scientific analysis of the problem, the subjective beliefs held by the people did not necessarily allow them to see the solution in such clear light. Their instinctive beliefs could well be 'turned' or maneuvered, and then there was fear

"fear that bigger numbers might politically overwhelm a minority... people had grown so accustomed to think along lines of religious cleavage, and were continually being encouraged to do so by communal religions organizations and government action, that the fear of the major community, that is the Hindus, swamping others continued to exercise the minds of many Moslems... fear is not unreasonable".<sup>23</sup> ✓

The masses did not act according to 'reason', because they had not been taught to do so. They acted by 'instinct' and were therefore susceptible to religious passions. Thus, although the demands of communalism were quite clearly those of a very small reactionary upper class within each community, the political support those demands received from the community at large were by any standard of rational explanation, quite extraordinary.

"It is nevertheless extraordinary how the bourgeois classes both among the Hindus and the Muslims, succeeded, in the sacred name of religion, in getting a measure of mass sympathy and support for programmes and demands which had absolutely nothing to do with the masses, or even the lower middle class... These narrow political demands, benefiting at the most a small number of upper middle classes and often creating barriers in the way of national unity and progress, were cleverly made to appear the demand of the masses of that particular group. Religious passion was hitched on to them in order to hide their barrenness... In this way political reactionaries come back to the political field in the guise of communal leaders, and the real explanation of the various steps they took was not so much their communal bias as their desire to obstruct political advance".<sup>24</sup>

Within the new scientific construction of society and politics, the problem of the subjective beliefs of the masses, as distinct from their objective economic interests, was not one which could be rationally comprehended, for these beliefs were located in the realm of unreason, of passions of spontaneity. All that could be comprehended were the motivation and interests of the political leaders and organizations which sought to manipulate the masses by playing up their religious passions. And so, understanding the politics of communalism becomes a problem of identifying which group of politicians used which particular issues to mislead which section of the people.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, who launched a movement in the late 19th century to popularize western education among Indian Muslims was not a reactionary because without this education, Muslims would have remained backward. "The Muslims were not historically or ideologically ready then for the bourgeoisie nationalist movement, as they had developed no bourgeoisie, as the Hindu's had done. Sir Syed's activities, therefore, although seemingly very moderate, were in the right revolutionary direction".<sup>25</sup> However in the early 20th century when the Aga Khan emerged as leader of the Muslims, it meant "the lining up of the Muslim landed classes as well as the growing bourgeoisie with the British government, by using the religious issue to forestall any political threat to stability of British rule or to the vested interests of the upper classes".<sup>26</sup> Still the inevitable drift of the Muslim bourgeoisie towards nationalism could not be stopped.

Following World War I, the Ali brothers, M.A. Ansari, Abul Kalam Azad and a number of bourgeoisie leaders, began to play an important part in the political affairs of the Muslims. Soon some of them were swept by Gandhi into the Non-Cooperation Movement. But the communal and backward elements both among the Hindus and the Muslims came back into the picture. There was a struggle for jobs for the middle class intelligentsia, there was also the special problem of Punjab, Sind and Bengal where the Hindus were the richer, creditor, urban class and Muslims the poorer, debtor, rural class. "The conflict between the two was therefore often economic but it was always given a communal colouring. There was communalism on the part of the Hindu politicians as well, 'masquerading' under a nationalist cloak, but really seeking to protect upper class Hindu interests".<sup>27</sup> But in each of these cases there was particular political leadership or organization which played upon the religious sentiments of the masses in order to gather support for particular policies or interests affecting only the upper classes. When these policies were in favour of broad goals of a united national movement, they were progressive, when not, they represented the activities of "a small reactionary group which had set out to "exploit and take advantage of the religious passions of the masses for their own ends".<sup>28</sup>

A Nehruian answer to the question why secularism has run into difficulties in India would, then, be that the people are not yet ready for it. It requires on level of general education that is yet beyond them, and a liberal outlook on life and scientific temper which unfortunately

they lack. The achievement of independence, the dislodging of British imperialism and efforts by the Indian State to underline the primacy of the economic, would automatically lead to a withering away of the religious and communal issue. Nehru believed that he failed in 'training' the masses toward this goal, and what was a 'side issue' continued to occupy centre stage.

## II

This derivative model of Indian secularism, derivative vs a vs the Enlightenment, has drawn persistent pronouncements deeply critical of Indian secularism, all dissenting with its priority. Amartya Sen lists half a dozen such.<sup>29</sup> It is possible to juxtapose the derivative model of Indian secularism with what may be termed as Authenticity model- authentic in that it is not derived of the Enlightenment, but draws its principles from the traditions and practices of the people of India and represents the Indian felt experience. Two major advocates of this view in recent years have been Ashis Nandy and T.N. Madan. It is their critique of Nehruvian secularism that I juxtapose here as the Authenticity model.

Prof. Madan, in the now famous article, "Secularism in its Place",<sup>30</sup> made the rather provocative statement that, "in the prevailing circumstances secularism in South Asia as a generally shared credo of life is impossible, as a basis for State action impracticable and as a blueprint for the foreseeable future impotent. It is impossible as a credo of life because the great majority of the people of South Asia are in their own eyes active adherents of some religious faith. It is impracticable as a basis for State action either because Buddhism and Islam have been declared state or state protected religions, (and Hinduism by one State as well one might add) or because the stance of religious neutrality or equidistance is difficult to maintain since religious minorities do not share the majority's views of what this entails for the State. And it is impotent as a blue print for the future because, by its very nature it is incapable of countering religious fundamentalism and fanaticism."<sup>31</sup>

Secularism for Madan is "the dream of a minority that wishes to shape the majority in its own image that wishes to impose its will upon history but lacks the power to do so under a democratically organised polity."<sup>32</sup>

Madan argues that South Asia's major religious traditions-Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism- are totalizing in character, claiming all of a follower's life, so that religion is constitutive of society. Madan further argues that in Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism the relationship between the sacred and secular is hierarchical. Thus in Buddhism for example, the 'Bhikkhu' or the world renouncer, is superior to the 'Chakravarti' or world conqueror.<sup>33</sup> Similarly in every Sikh Gurudwara the sacred sword is placed for veneration at lower level than the holy book, the Granth Sahib, which is the repository of the word, shabad despite the fact that for the Sikhs, the sword too symbolized the divinity, or more accurately, the inseparability of the spiritual and the religious functions. Madan cites illustrations from both Hinduism and Islam too,-

He quotes Muhammad Iqbal- "In Islam the spiritual and the temporal are not two distinct domains... The ultimate reality according to the Quran is spiritual, and its life consists in its temporal activity. The spirit finds its opportunities in the natural, the material, the secular. All that is secular is therefore sacred in the roots of its being... There is no such thing as a profane world... all is Holy Ground."<sup>34</sup>

Similarly in Hinduism, the discrete realms of interest and power (Artha), are opposed to and yet encompassed by Dharma—that informs every action—the sacred and the secular. For Madan the search for secular elements in the cultural traditions of this (South Asia) region is a futile exercise, for it is not these but an ideology of imported secularism that is absent (in South Asia) and is resisted.<sup>35</sup> Secularism is for Madan, a gift of Christianity-post Reformation-Protestant Christianity and has been built into Western social theorist's paradigms of modernization, and since these paradigms are believed to have universal applicability, the elements that converged historically... to constitute modern life in Europe in the 16th century and the following three centuries have come to be presented as the requirements of modernization everywhere.... Models of modernization, (however), prescribe the transfer of secularism to non-western societies without regard for the character of their religious traditions or for the gifts that these might have to offer...(and) borrowed ideas, unless internalized, do not have the power to bestow on us the gift and grace of living.<sup>36</sup>

Ashis Nandy calls himself an anti secularist because he "feels that the ideology and politics of secularism have more or less exhausted their possibilities".<sup>37</sup> For him secularism has two meanings current in modern and semi modern India—the first secularism—chalks out an area in public life where religion is not admitted. Implicit in the ideology is the belief that managing the public realm is a science that is essentially universal that religion, to the extent it is opposed to the Baconian world image of science, is an open or potential threat to any modern polity. In contrast the non western meaning of secularism revolves around equal respect for all religions. It implies that while the public life may or may not be kept free of religion, it must have space for a continuous dialogue among religious traditions and between the religious and the secular—that in the ultimate analysis, each major faith in the region includes within it an in house version of the other faiths both as an internal criticism and as a reminder of the diversity of the theory of transcendence. While India's Westernized intellectuals have consciously opted for the abolition of religion from the public space, most non modern Indians pushed around by the political and cultural forces unleashed by colonialism still operating in Indian society, have unwittingly opted for the accommodative and pluralist meaning.<sup>38</sup>

The point of departure then, for Nandy too, is India's imposed modernity and he fears the accelerating process of modernization in India as a consequence of which there is, in his words "a cleaner fit between the declared ideology of the modern Indian nation-state and the secularism that fears religious ethnicities."<sup>39</sup>

Associated with this is hidden political hierarchy is a four-fold classification of the political actors of the subcontinent. At the top of the hierarchy are those who are believers neither in public nor in private. They are supposed to be scientific and rational and they are expected to ultimately not only rule-this society but also dominate its political culture. To this category belongs Jawaharlal Nehru. On the second rung of the ladder are those who choose not to appear as believers in public despite being devout believers in private. Nandy places Indira Gandhi here. On the third rung are those who are believers in public but do not believe in private. Mohammad Ali Jinnah and V.D. Savarkar as well as Ambedkar (when he converted to Buddhism) are illustrious examples. At the bottom of the hierarchy are those who believe in public as well as private. The best and Nandy says – most notorious-example is that of Gandhi who openly believed both in public and in private and gave his belief spectacular play in politics.<sup>40</sup>

Nandy believes that as India gets modernized religious violence is increasing and this is so because our society is losing the traditional ways of life, to the onslaught of modernization, which have over the centuries developed internal principles of tolerance. It is these principles that must have a play in contemporary politics, religious communities in traditional societies have known how to live with each other.

It is not modern India which has tolerated Hinduism in India for nearly two thousand years, Christianity from before the time it went to Europe and Zoroastrianism for over twelve hundred years. It is traditional India which has shown such tolerance. For Nandy, Asoka, Akbar and Gandhi- derived their tolerance not from secularism but from Buddhism, Islam and Sanatan Dharma (Hinduism).<sup>41</sup>

The moral of the story for Nandy is this – “it is time to recognize that, instead of trying to build religious tolerance on the good faith or conscience of a small group of de-ethnicized, middle class politicians, bureaucrats, and intellectuals, a far more serious venture would be to explore the philosophy, the symbolism and the theology of tolerance in the faiths of the citizens.”<sup>42</sup>

Why is it then that the Nehruian vision of a secular India failed to take hold? – the answer is that there was something deeply flawed with the vision itself-that it represented an alien imposed modernity not in consonance with the daily lives and belief patterns of the multitudes, was not authentic enough.

### III

We then have two discourses the derivative discourse and the authenticity discourse. Is it possible to see the limitations of the authenticity discourse as well? Yes it is. Akeel Bilgrami offers the following criticism. This discourse is Ashis Nandy's nostalgia for bygone pre-modernism, based on a faulty historiography, placing the fault line at the initiation of

modernity by the secular Nehruvian state. For him the processes of communal fission are pre-modern originating in the Brahmanical construct of the relationship of the sacred and the secular and in the use by the British of these internal fissions. For him, Nehruvian secularism is indeed an imposition-but an imposition in the sense that it assumed that secularism stood outside the substantive arena of political commitments. It failed because it was not there with Hinduism and Islam as one among substantive contested political commitments to be negotiated as any other contested commitment must be negotiated one with the other.<sup>43</sup>

Nehru failed to provide a creative dialogue between communities, he refused to let a secular policy emerge through negotiation between different communitarian voices by denying at every step in the various conferrings with the British, Jinnah's demand that the Muslim league represent the Muslims-a Sikh leader represent the Sikhs, and a Harijan leader represent the untouchable community. The ground for this denial was simply that as a secular party they could not accept that they did not represent all these communities.<sup>44</sup>

Nehru and Jinnah fell out with each other personally too-and held each other in considerable contempt. Khushwant Singh places the blame for over a million deaths and the rendering homeless of several millions, during the sub continental partition, squarely on the blunder they both made.<sup>45</sup> What then is the danger in relying solely on the traditional ability of communities to generate wise socio-religious tolerance?

Nietzsche has said-

"Not only the wisdom of the centuries-also their madness breaketh out in us. Dangerous is it to be an heir."

When communities, bound by ethical visions of the good and possessing a core of substantive values, coexist peacefully, they add to the richness of human existence-when they conflict with one another the battle that ensues leads to endless destruction.<sup>46</sup> The inability of the authenticity discourse to transcend parochialism and occupy the national consciousness is as visible as the inability of the derivative to include the traditional in its formulations.<sup>47</sup>

It is perhaps in between these two that India must renegotiate with the sacred and the secular; struggle to find new meaning.

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there would be no communalism any more. For example- "Fundamentally this communal problem is a problem of the conflict between the members of the upper middle class Hindus and Muslims for jobs and power under the new constitution. It does not affect the masses at all. Not a single communal demand has the least reference to any economic issues in India or has the least reference to the masses".

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46. Bhargava, Rajeev, 'What is Secularism For?' in Rajeev, Bhargava, (ed.) op.cit – pp.406-542.

This is similar to the inability of the derivative leadership to respond to the needs of the traditional local community (Nehru-vs a vs Ramachandra in Kisan Movement leadership analysis of Awadh – 1919-22) and the inability of the authentic leadership of Ramchandra to rise to the national level. – Paper entitled, 'Authenticity and Derivativeness-A Study of the leadership of the Kisan Sabha Movement in Awadh', of the present author.

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## CORRUPTION IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE : A CASE OF INDIA

Arun Kr. Agrawal

*One begins to wonder whether we are the same who rode to freedom with truth and sacrifice as our motto. By adopting an holistic approach and by co-opting all the principal actors in the process of anti-corruption reform, a country or community can enhance its capacity-to curtail corruption to manageable levels. But none of this can be tackled without enlightened and determined political leadership, without high levels of public awareness and support, and without a motivated and well-led private sector. In many countries, the most difficult element in the equation is that of developing a vibrant evil society willing and able to play a meaningful role in shaping its environment.*

We belong to the land of Gandhiji for whom truth and non-violence were the fundamental principles of existence. Going back in time 2000 years, I quote the Vedic dictum, 'Satyam vadhadharmam charah'. Our nation's motto is Satyameva Jayate. Therefore, at the level of lip service, we are all for truth and honesty. Our government believes that truth will prevail and all our religions advocate that we should tell the truth. But, the reality is that India is one of the most corrupt countries in the world.

Nobody really knows the exact extent of corruption in India. However, everybody is aware that it is all pervasive and that it is eating inexorably in to the vitals of the nation. If corruption, graft and nepotism are not checked in time, there is no doubt that the future of democracy is in peril. To those of us who are aware of the high standards of morality that prevailed before, and soon after, India became an independent nation, the comparison is indeed heartbreaking. Out looks in vain for uprightness, efficiency, excellence and devotion to duty which characterized the administration of former times. One begins to wonder whether we are the same who rode to freedom with truth and sacrifice as our motto. By adopting an holistic approach and by co-opting all the principal actors in the process of anti-corruption reform, a country or community can enhance its capacity-to curtail corruption to manageable levels. But none of this can be tackled without enlightened and determined political leadership, without high levels of public awareness and support, and without a motivated and well-led private sector. In many countries, the most difficult element in the equation is that of developing a vibrant evil society willing and able to play a meaningful role in shaping its environment.

Every one knows what corruption is; but it is difficult to define it in exact terms.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary<sup>1</sup>, the word 'corrupt' means "influenced by bribery, especially at the time of elections". Encyclopaedia Britannica<sup>2</sup> says a corrupt practice "includes bribery; but has reference to the electoral system". But these, as will be seen, are not definitions.

Corruption has been defined by the World Bank as the 'use of public office for private profit'. In our country, there are five major players on the corruption scene, interdependent, strengthening and supportive of the vicious cycle. They are the neta, the corrupt politician; the babu, the corrupt bureaucrat; the lala, the corrupting businessman; the jhola, the corrupt NGO; and the dada the criminal of the underworld.

Corruption is a two-way street for every bribe taker, there is a bribe giver.

A straightforward definition would be the abuse of public officer for private gain. Public office is abused for private gain. When an official accepts, solicits, or extorts a bribe.

The word 'corruption' is generally defined in the context of specific normative standards. Thus, according to the Santhanam committee<sup>3</sup>, the term includes all "improper or selfish exercise of power and influence attached to a public office or to a special position one occupies in public life". This definition covers value-loaded terms like 'improper', and 'selfish'.

Corruption may be alternatively defined as unlawful practices. Thus, Section 161 of the Indian Penal Code<sup>4</sup> defines corruption as follows:

"Whoever, being or expecting to be a public servant, accepts or obtains, or agrees to accept, or attempts to obtain gratification whatever, other than legal remuneration as a motive or a reward for doing or forbearing to do any official act or for showing or forbearing to show, in the exercise of his official functions, favour or disfavour to any person, with the Central or State Government or Parliament or Legislature of any State or with any public servants as such...".

Section 161 aims at penalising simply the receipt of illegal gratification. Section 123 of the Representation of the People Act, defines corruption as practised in relations to elections. Section 5(1) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1947, defines criminal misconduct of a public servant in the discharge of his duties in the following terms: A public servant is said to commit the offense of criminal misconduct:

- (a) If he habitually accepts or obtains or agrees to accept or attempts to obtain for himself or any other person, any gratification (other than legal remuneration) as a motive or reward such as is mentioned in Section 161 of the Indian Penal Code; or
- (b) If he habitually accepts or obtains or attempts to obtain for himself or any other person any valuable thing without consideration which he knows to be inadequate, from any person, whom he knows to have been, or to be likely to be concerned in any proceeding or business transacted or about to be transacted by him, or having any connection with the official functions of himself or of any public servant to whom he is subordinate, or from any person whom he knows to be interested in or related to the person so concerned;

or

- (c) If he is dishonestly or fraudulently misappropriates or otherwise converts for his own use any property entrusted to him or under his control as a public servant or allows any other person so to do; or
- (d) If he, by corrupt and illegal means or by otherwise abusing his position as public servant, obtains for himself or for any other person any valuable thing or pecuniary advantage; or

If he or any other person on his behalf is in possession or has, at any time, during the period of his office, been in possession, for which the public servant can not satisfactorily account, of pecuniary resources or property disproportionate to his own income.

Corruption is a fact of life. It is as old as the human society itself. It exists in one form or another in every society. According to Ralph Braibanti, Governmental corruption is found in all bureaucracy and in all periods of political development. But its degree is not uniform at all times or under all conditions. "It is also obviously more common in some societies than in others and more common at some times in the evolution of a society than at other times<sup>6</sup>".

To say that all was pure and idyllic in the early period of history will be travesty of truth. History is replete with examples of widespread corruption in the oriental and occidental societies during the ancient and medieval period.

During ancient times in Egyptian, Babylonian` and Herblew societies judges did not hesitate to receive bribes. Using their position as priests, the Sons of "Eli" extorted more than their share of the sacrifices from the people<sup>7</sup>.

"The growth of corruption in Greece in the latter period of its history could be attributed to the increase in economic activity and the growth of political apathy. The vigorous and keen interest which the Greek citizens used to display in the governance of the Greek city state gradually waned as could be evident from their poor attendance at public meetings. With the opening of new opportunities for speculation, bribery and corruption began to increase<sup>8</sup>".

In ancient Rome also corrupt practices prevailed. Bribery was a regular source of income for those who were in charge of issuing contracts of public works. Bribery and corruption were common features in election to public offices such as the Senate and the Court<sup>9</sup>.

In Rome, the prevalence of wide-scale corruption seems to have been "the consequence of an unwieldy electoral system which derived from history<sup>10</sup> .

Corruption was not approved by the Roman Republic. Person like Cicero who were interested to reform the degenerate Republic made some attempts to unearth and bring to trial

extreme cases of corruption<sup>11</sup>. But it was too late for these attempts to succeed. The ethical atmosphere of the Republic had already been polluted and limits considerably transgressed. Corruption had become so common that corrupt practices, rather than the strict morals of the forefathers, had become the accepted mode of behaviour<sup>12</sup>.

During the medieval times corruption manifested itself in Rome in the form of extortion of revenue by the local and central officials and the perversion of justice. Those who were in the service of the kings and the perversion of justice. Those who were in the service of the kings and feudal barons became instrumental in the collection of illegal money<sup>13</sup>. Attempts to regulate trade in accordance with the principles of the mercantile system and the continental system produced well-developed mechanisms of smuggling in many cases aided by official corruption<sup>14</sup>.

Corrupt practices developed in the common law courts of England. Judicial officers were being sold in France during the fifteenth century.

Then came the period of exploration and colonization and, during the period, corruption took the same form as under the Roman Republic. The governors of Spanish and Portuguese provinces, who had absolute powers over their territories, amassed wealth for themselves, and the central government, which was itself corrupt, could not punish the governors because they were far removed from the capital city. The story of the East India Company officials amassing vast fortunes by corrupt practices is well known.

#### Ancient Times :

Like other countries, India was not free from corruption during its ancient period. But the extent of evil was certainly far less than what it is at present. A.L. Basham while writing on the administration of justice in India observes: "Though judicial corruption is often referred to, the standard set for judges and magistrates is very high, they are to be learned, religious, devoid of anger, and as impartial as is humanly possible to prevent bribery. It is suggested that no private interviews should be allowed between judges and litigants till the cases are settled. The Arthashastra advises that the honesty of the judges should be periodically tested by agent provocateurs, while the Vishnu Smriti prescribes banishment and forfeiture of all property of a judge found guilty of corruption and injustice.

Kautilya in his Arthashastra has written a chapter titled "Detection of what is embezzled by government servants out of state revenue"<sup>15</sup> which "reads like a modern official report on modes of corruption and corresponding punishments"<sup>16</sup>. He has mentioned about forty types of embezzlement. They are: "what is realised earlier is entered later on,"<sup>17</sup> what is realised later is entered earlier,<sup>18</sup> what ought to be realised is not realised; not realised; what is hard

to realise is shown as realised;<sup>19</sup> what is collected is shown as not collected; what has not been collected is shown as collected; what is collected in part is entered as collected in full; what is collected in full is entered as collected in part; what is collected is of one sort,<sup>20</sup> while what is entered is of another sort; what is realised from one source is shown as realised from another; what is payable is not paid; what is not payable is paid; not paid in time;<sup>21</sup> paid untimely;<sup>22</sup> small gifts made large gifts; large gifts made small gifts, what is gifted is of one sort while what is entered is of another. The real donee is one while the person entered (in the register) as donee is another; what has been taken in to (the treasury) is removed while what has not been credited to it is shown as credited, raw materials that are not paid for are entered while those that are paid for are not entered; an aggregate is scattered in pieces<sup>23</sup>, scattered items are converted in to an aggregate;<sup>24</sup> commodities of greater value are bartered for those of small value, what is of smaller value is bartered for one of greater value; prices of commodities are enhanced; prices of commodities lowered; number of nights increased;<sup>25</sup> number of nights decreased; the year not in harmony with its months; the month not in harmony with its days; inconsistency in the transactions<sup>26</sup> carried on with personal supervision; misrepresentation of the source of income; inconsistency in giving charities; incongruity<sup>27</sup> in representing the work turned out; inconsistency in dialing with fixed items; misrepresentation of prices of commodities; making use of false weights and measures; deception in counting articles and making use of false cubic measures such as Bhajana". Ashoka's dharmic state following closely on the heals of Kautilya's times, must have had the minimum of corruption<sup>28</sup>. Corruption prevailed on a lower scale in India during the ancient period than during the ones that followed.

#### **Medieval India :**

The exaction of perquisites and presents was one of the greatest evils of medieval administration in the East and the West alike<sup>29</sup>. It may be useful to note how corruption prevailed in medieval India under different dynasties that ruled the country at different times.

During the Khilji Rule in India corruption was rampant among the lower officials, particularly those belonging to the department of revenue. Drastic measures were adopted to check corruption. It was realised by Allauddin Khilji realized that the low salaries of the officials tempted them to accept and even extort bribes. Therefore, he increased their salaries so that they could lead a comfortable life. But when this measure did not improve the situation, and corruption continued to prevail among the petty officials, the Sultan ruthlessly punished all those found guilty of corruption. The punitive measures<sup>30</sup> taken by Allauddin had a salutary effect. It was no longer possible for any one to accept even one rupee from either a Hindu or a Muslim as illegal gratification.

When the Tughlaq Dynasty was in power in India from 1320-1414, corruption prevailed

in the form of nepotism. Until the time of Feroz Shah Tughlaq the appointments were not on hereditary basis but on efficiency which was the chief criterion for getting in to office<sup>31</sup>. Qualified and talented persons, even foreigners, were appointed in different services. However, criteria like efficiency and merit, the basis of recruitment of Public Personnel, were ignored by Feroz Shah Tughlaq. He introduced the hereditary element in the imperial and provincial services. Father was succeeded by his son in almost all the branches of government. As the altar of hereditary and nepotism, efficiency was sacrificed: "The parts of the machinery became loose and its wheels needed oiling under Feroz Shah and were clogged occasionally during the period of civil wars following his death.

During the reign of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq the Superintendents or undertakers, before inaugurating or undertaking a scheme, were rewarded by the king with "caparisoned horses, rich robes of honour and estates." Large sums of money were also paid to them to launch new projects. The undertakers also paid to them to launch new projects. The undertakers had received seventy million "tangas" as rewards. But on the expiry of the stipulated period of three years it was found that little of what had been promised was done<sup>32</sup>. When the undertakers found it difficult to make their ends meet, they appropriated for their own use all that they had received from the king<sup>33</sup>.

Mr. J.R.B. Jeejeebhoy gives a vivid account of corruption under various rulers in the centuries that followed the downfall of the Maurian Empire in his book, Bribery and Corruption in Bombay (1952). Says Alexander Hamilton in his New Account of the East Indies (1774): "The Mohammadans have the law in their hands and distribute 'Justice best to those who pay best for it. The judge's fees are twenty-five per cent on all sums that he pronounces due to the party whose plea is best supported by bribes or interest, for the justice of the cause seldom prevails". (Cited in Jeejeebhoy's book, p.3).

Corruption was rampant in the Mughal Empire, even in the heyday of its glory. Of conditions towards the end of the sixteenth century Sir Thomas Roe wrote: "the people of India live as fishes do in the sea the great ones eat up the little. For first, the farmer robs the peasant, the gentleman robs the farmer, the greater robs the lesser, and the king robs all". Francisco Peisart, Chief of the Dutch factory at Agra, wrote in 1626 as follows:

"The second scourge is the oppression of the Governor, nobles, Diwan, Kotwal, Bakshi, and other imperial officers. If one of these wants a workman, the man is not asked if he is willing to come, but is seized in his house or in the street, well beaten if he should dare to raise any objection, and in the evening paid half his wages, or perhaps nothing at all".

This was far worse than corruption, for the victim sacrificed money and got nothing in return except that he was thoroughly thrashed.

About corruption during the days of the Portuguese, an official report of 1542 said:

"Justice was sold at the tribunals, and the most in famous crimes escaped punishment when the criminals were affluent enough to corrupt the judges. All methods of accumulating wealth were considered lawful, and extortion was openly advocated."

#### During Colonial Days

During the British rule in India there was almost systematic corruption involving almost all officials starting from the Governor down to the lowest revenue official "making hay while the sun of British Raj shone"<sup>34</sup>. From the days of clive and Hastings down to a comparatively recent period bribery and corruption were prevalent even among the highest and "were literally winked at by the Government"<sup>35</sup>. It may be said that from the Governor down to the meanest factor people came to India not for the "good but for the "goods" of the country"<sup>36</sup>.

Things must have greatly improved in India some time often the establishment of direct rule by the British Crown. British rule, there is no doubt, tried to reduce corruption and kept at least the top officers of the administration free from temptation and corruption by paying them adequate salary. The Islington Commission laid down the principle of public salaries thus:

"The only safe criterion is that government should pay so much and so much and so much only to their employees as is necessary to obtain recruits of the rights stamp, and to maintain them in such a degree of comfort and dignity as will shield them from temptation, etc."

While there was practically no corruption in the ranks of the "Imperial" (or Secretary of State's) Services, the incidence of corruption increased in the lower rungs of the ladder of public-administration.

The laissez-faire policy of he government, which limited the activities of the state to the barest minimum, was partly responsible for reducing-corruption during the early days of British rule in India.

Under the British rule in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, corruption and nepotism wove a strange pattern. The pattern was contradictory too. Certain sections of the administration such as police, irrigation, and public works were singularly free from corruption. At the lower level of the administration, acceptance of routine benefits, particularly if they could be obtained without under resentment, was scarcely considered corruption. If a policeman visited a village in response to a call, it was tacitly assumed that he would be fed well and given accommodation for the duration of his stay. But a senior officer on tour was not to accept food or services "not even a bundle of grass for his horse", without payment.

"There was a stern rule of conduct forbidding acceptance of even small gifts by a responsible officer. Young probationers of the Indian Civil Service were constantly reminded of the rules and rebuked, some times reprimanded, if they were found to have accepted, even unwillingly, a gift as trivial as a small melon or a glass of butter milk"<sup>37</sup>.

### Independent India

The situation has completely changed after the British left India. Britons who exercised authority in India were only a few in number, represented an autocratic regime, and were not exposed to the same kind of family and caste pressures which their Indian successors are subject to constantly. The area over which their administration touched the lives of the people was also limited. There's was a 'law and order regime' administering a country with a stagnant agricultural economy. The scope for corruption as well as temptations was limited. The British could therefor, evolve an impersonal law and enforce it by and large impersonally. They could afford to adopt a sanctimonious attitude on the subject. Indians, on the other hand, have traditionally, accepted corruption and nepotism with a certain amount of resignation. Resentment is felt and expressed only. When there is high-hendedness or corruption is excessive. "In the Indian set of common values, it is generally assumed that those who exercise authority or happen to be close to those who do so must be entitled to privileged position and that, up to a point, their indiscretion must be overlooked."<sup>38</sup>

The damage that public toleration of corruption and nepotism caused under the British rule was limited. The economy was primitive, and only a segment of the population came in contact with public authorities. Official corruption therefor, touched their lives but rarely and briefly. In independent India, however, the government and its numerous agencies disburse vast funds and patronage and it decisions affect the citizen's life more intimately.

With the advent of independence and the beginning of economic planning, the corruption front opened up for large-scale escalation. Because of its very nature, we have no systematic information of the shape or size of the monster of corruption and graft, but by all accounts they are truly formidable. The Central and State governments publish, from time to time, reports of the number of officers of various ranks arrested, prosecuted, convicted, fined, failed, etc. and though the figures published are themselves substantial, they obviously reflect only a very small fraction of the incidence of corruption by government officials. Even so, the list of officers proceeded against is very impressive. Secretaries to government, commissioners, heads of departments, chief engineers, superintending engineers, executive engineers, superintendents of police, circle inspectors of police, sub inspectors of police, circle inspectors of police, sub inspectors of police, superintendents and clerks in government offices, staff of hospitals and almost every other government official fill the roll call of honor. We hear also, from time to time,

of prima facie cases of corruption established against Ministers and ex Ministers in inquiries by commissions, but the impact of the conclusions on such cases gets lost in the inevitable protraction and indecisions that are characteristic of such inquiries.

### **Corruption in Present India**

'Corruption by Public Servants has now reached a monstrous dimension in India and its tentacles have started grappling even the institutions created for the protection of the Republic. Unless these tentacles are intercepted and impeded from gripping the normal and orderly functioning of public officers, through strong legislative, executive as well as judicial exercises, the corrupt public servants could even paralyse the functioning of such institutions and thereby hinder the democratic polity.'

- (Supreme Court of India (2001)

Consequently, in India, corruption has become a social phenomenon. There is hardly any area of activity that has remained wholly free from the impact of corruption. In fact, the corruption has now been institutionalised and has become a commonly accepted way of life.

For the last several years there has been growing indication that corruption has stormed all aspects of our public life. It was becoming obvious that corruption was no longer a question merely of individual moral turpitude. Now it has become so widespread that it was starting to eat into the vitals of our economy, our polity and our society. From top to bottom, Prime-Minister to a peon, cutting across every office or organisation of all Governments, Central, State or local, the vast majority of public officials in this country have become corrupt.

India is rated as one of the most corrupt countries in the world. It is ranked 69 out of 90 countries in the Corruption Perception Index, which is published by the Transparency International, a NGO in Berlin. The least corrupt country at rank one is Finland and the most corrupt is Nigeria.

India has lost many of its noble values and goals. Now the people have become greedy and with huge amounts of unaccounted black money indulge in extravagance and vulgar display of wealth. These filthy rich by their spending spree have been influencing the decision making authorities and subverting and corrupting the social and political system. The democratic system that has emerged is not strong enough in fighting the sinister interest, which accumulate and multiply the ill-gotten money surreptitiously. The major cause for the perpetuation of such sordid practices is due to the general apathy, passivity and totally indifferent attitude towards the corrupt and corruption. The courage to stand against corruption has become rare because dissent and protest lead to suffering and anguish. As the nation celebrates the golden jubilee of its independence, there arises a big doubt on the credibility of own democratic institutions.

A fairly large section of society seems to have lost faith in the fairness and impartiality of the entire system of governance. Independence, fairness and impartiality seem to have become an enigma without proper functioning of democratic institutions. "It is indeed incredible that during the last decade or so the country's moral, mental and material resources have been expended on a series of highly outrageous financial scandals which have frittered away our energy, sullied our image and greatly hampered own growth as vibrant society". A plethora of scams and scandals stained the democratic fabric of India where a nexus among politicians, bureaucrats, media persons, underworld mafia and criminals is being exposed. A weak system manned by languid leaders is vulnerable to pressures and temptation.

As a matter of fact, we have not seen corruption in all its awesome forms. All that we get, from time to time, is a brief glimpse of some part or other of this elusive, but nevertheless all pervading, affliction of the body politic which threatens to throw the entire administration of the country in to confusion and chaos. Corruption has spread its tentacles to every nook and corner of public life. It thrives at the cost of the public and oppresses the poor, who can not join the game, to the point of desperation.

The social conscience of an average Indian is weak. Apparently, the family and the caste or the community in which he lives make such exacting demands on his loyalty-and affections that he is left with little inclination to concern himself with issues and problems concerning areas beyond. National problems, like corruption therefore, arouse his enthusiasm to suppress or eradicate it only mildly and temporarily.

If urgent and stern measures are not taken to stem the rot, beginning with Ministers downwards, there is every possibility that we shall be the next Country in the expanding list of countries. Where corruption is the normal way of life and honesty a pitiful or, even laughable, aberration. Nay, the cancer of corruption, in the proportions it has attained, may well dig in to the vitals of our democratic state and eventually destroy it.

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14. Senturia, op. cit. P. 449.
15. Shamasastri, op. cit., pp.15-17.
16. Monteiro, op. cit., p.19.
17. Such as rice, etc.
18. Such as the late crops, wheat, etc.
19. Taxes from Brahmins.
20. Such as pulses in place of rice, etc.
21. Not giving gifts on the occasion of marriages as ordered by the king.
22. Giving gift later with a view to force to receiver to give bribes to the officer or clerk.
23. Such as representing an assessment of 1,000 panas levied from a whole village as small individuals assessments, making up the total in view of making use of a part of the taxes for himself under the pretext of non-payment of the part. (Bottaswami's commentary in Shamsastri, op. cit., p.17.)
24. Making ryotwar assessments as village-assessments.
25. With a view to misappropriate the wages due for the increased or decreased days. The word "ratri" night, is used both for day and night. (Bottaswami's commentary).
26. Starting that a labourer has been paid outside the office, while in reality no such payment has been made.
27. As in the case of superintendent of boats misappropriating ferry dues under the false plea that only Brahmans crossed the river on a particular day.
28. R.C. Majumdar, Ancient India, Revised edition, Motilal Banarsi Das, Delhi, 1960, p.113.
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30. Punishments were severe and barbarous. "Decapitation, mutilation of limbs, putting an offender in to fetters were common forms of punishment given to the culprit or wrong

doers. Flogging was also very common. Often persons received stripes. It was usual to spill blood on trivial occasions and for small crimes to mutilate and torture them by cutting off the hands and feet, and noses and ears, by putting out eyes, by pulverizing the bones of the living criminals with mallets, by burning the body with fire, by crucification and by nailing the hands and feet, by flaying alive, by the operation of hamstring and by cutting human beings in to pieces. Tountures were inflicted for extorting confession. The fraudulent shop keepers who were found guilty of giving short weight were forced to make up the deficiency from flesh chopped from their bodies. Stoning to death for adultery, hanging of the body of the dead for days together on spear-head, and parading it into the city were of common occurrence. Allauddin was extremely severe in punishing the guilty; for offences like smuggling wine in to the city or drinking in public, the offenders were imprisoned in abominable wells dug for that purpose. So horrible were these prisons that many people died in them and those who escaped alive were completely shattered in health. These wells were full of rats and snakes, Brokers in horse trade were furnished to distant fortresses."

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## **IMPACT OF COALITION POLITICS ON CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF INDIA**

*Anurag Ratna*

*Coalition politics is not something very unique for students of parliamentary government. Wherever no political party gets majority in the elections to the Lower or popular house of legislature, a number of political parties join hands to form a coalition government. This type of government is very common in Europe.<sup>1</sup> The political factors responsible for formation, shape, politics, continuation, dissolution, success and failures etc. of coalition government are broadly referred to as coalition politics. Coalition politics takes different form and makes different impact on various countries constitution according to their social, cultural and economic conditions. It is therefore necessary to have a prehand knowledge of the circumstances in which coalition politics started in India and through which it passed.*

### **Introduction**

Constitution of a country sets limits within which politics can be practiced but it does not determine the actual nature of politics which is determined by a number of social, economic & cultural factors which is why the same type of constitution gives birth to different types of politics in countries with different socio-cultural milieu. On the contrary the politics of every country has its impact on the course of its constitutional development, directly or indirectly, formally or informally. The aim of this paper is to analyze the changes introduced by coalition politics and assess their impact on constitutional developments.

### **Brief History :**

Coalition politics is not something very unique for students of parliamentary government. Wherever no political party gets majority in the elections to the Lower or popular house of legislature, a number of political parties join hands to form a coalition government. This type of government is very common in Europe.<sup>1</sup> The political factors responsible for formation, shape, politics, continuation, dissolution, success and failures etc. of coalition government are broadly referred to as coalition politics. Coalition politics takes different form and makes different impact on various countries constitution according to their social, cultural and economic conditions. It is therefore necessary to have a prehand knowledge of the circumstances in which coalition politics started in India and through which it passed.

The history of coalition politics is closely associated with the downfall of the Congress Party in Indian politics because it stated in the states and at centre both when the Congress was defeated at polls perhaps explains why Congress was against participating in coalition government at the Centre till 2004.

Coalition governments were first formed in states like UP, Haryana, M.P., Bihar etc. after the downfall of the Congress in these states in the election held in 1967. These coalition

governments were popularly known as S.V.D. (Samyukta Vidhayak Dal) governments. These coalition governments ended the domination of Congress Party in state politics and provided the opportunities for governance to opposite parties. These S.V.D. Governments were mostly managed by the leaders of opposition parties who had no or little experience of governance. Hence very soon these coalition governments earned bad names for themselves and were equated in popular perception with indecision, delay, indiscipline, misuse of power and even sale and purchase of M.L.A.'s. They became the symbol of political corruption, lust of power, erosion of chief minister's authority, decline in collective responsibility of cabinet etc.

Just as in the states, the coalition politics began at the centre with the defeat of Congress Party in the 1977 elections when the first Non-Congress government headed by Majorji Desai was formed in New Delhi. Although technically this government was a one party (Janata Party) government, actually it was a coalition government because the Janata Party was itself a conglomeration of five political parties, i.e. Congress (O), Socialist Party, Bhartiya Lok Dal (BLD), Jana Sangh and the Congress fro Democracy, (C.F.D.). Therefore, it functioned, faced problems and died as a coalition government. Chaudhary Charan Singh formed another Non Congress government with the outside support of the Congress in 1979 which fell within a month necessitating mid-term poll in 1980 in which the Congress won and Indira Gandhi returned to power. Again the Congress returned to power in 1985 election in which her son Rajiv Gandhi got ¾ majority due to sympathy wave generated due to murder of Indira Gandhi in 1984. V.P. Singh formed another Non congress government in 1989 with outside support of left parties and BJP and Chandra Shekhar formed one more non-congress government in 1990. Both these governments were technically one party minority government formed with the outside support of one or another political party.

The real coalition era dawned in 1996 when the general election to the 11th Lok Sabha resulted in a hung Lok Sabha in which no party or combination of parties got majority.

As no party or combination of parties got majority, the President Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma invited Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the leader of the largest party to form the government and prove his majority on May 31. He was sworn in as Prime Minister on May 16. The motion of confidence moved by him on 27th May was discussed for 10 hours on May 27 and 28. The motion was, however, not put to vote as Vajpayee announced during the debate itself that he was going to resign. He went straight from Parliament house to the Rashtrapati Bhawan and submitted his resignation to the President on May 28 itself<sup>2</sup>. From May 29 to June 1, Atal Bihari Vajpayee government worked as caretaker government.

After the resignation of Atal Bihari Vajpayee on May 28, 1996, the president asked P.V. Narasimha Rao the leader of the second largest party to form the government but he

declined.<sup>3</sup> Thereafter the President turned to the National front and the Left front for providing alternative government.

The National Front and Left front made hectic efforts to find out a suitable person for Prime Minister ship. First they tried to persuade V.P. Singh and Jyoti Basu to lead the combination. When they refused, they agreed only on the name of H.D. Deve Gowda who not member of any house at that time. The congress also offered it support to Deve Gowda. Many writers have criticized the president for appointing Deve Gowda the leader of the united front comprising 13 parties was sworn in as Prime Minister of the second coalition government on June 1, 19964 as asked by the president, he proved his majority in the Lok Sabha on June, 12, through a motion of confidence.<sup>5</sup>

In very dramatic circumstance the Congress withdrew support from the Deve Gowda government. As a result the government fell in a vote of confidence and he resigned on April 11, 1997<sup>6</sup>. Deve Gowda worked as care-taker Prime Minister for April 11th to 21, 1997. The Deve Gowda government was the first government at the centre to represent anti-upper caste and anti-Brahmin forces. All parties moved away from their declared ideals. It was the first government in which no upper caste people found any places. Southerners and backward people dominated. It was really a federalist government, however, because of the composition as the council of ministers, much was not expected.<sup>7</sup>

Deve Gowda government truly represented the composition of the Lok Sabha because there was dominance of backward classes, dalits and Muslims in the Lok Sabha and Council of Minister both, However, since the government depended on Congress support from outside, people in general did not hope much from this government.<sup>8</sup> This proved true when the government fell on April 11. The Congress President Sita Ram Kesari who was annoyed with Deve Gowda for some personal reasons, offered to support U.F. government if the front changed the leader. The Congress had nothing against the government or its policies but was against the leader.

After this offer of the Congress, United Front once again started the search for another suitable candidate for Prime-Ministership. Again the process of elimination started. Several names such as those of Y.K. Moopnar, Laloo Prasad Yadav, Mulayam Singh Yadav were considered but each of them was opposed by strong groups and persons. Ultimately they all agreed on the name of I.K. Gujral who was foreign minister in the outgoing ministry of Deve Gowda. Gujral took oath of office on April 21, 1997 and formed the third coalition government at the centre with outside support of the Congress.<sup>10</sup>

Prabhu Chawla, editor of "India Today" is of the opinion that Gujral was never an independent prime-minister and he had always to bow down before the allies in various matters

like constitution of ministers, allotment of portfolios etc<sup>11</sup> Prithish Nandy says that he was too good a man to be prime minister at that time.<sup>12</sup> Ram Bahadur Rai says that he was the first prime minister who had no right to constitute his cabinet, Shekhar Gupta has branded him as bonded Prime Minister.<sup>14</sup> According to Bhawani Sen Gupta he was not a politician; Prime-Ministership was thrust upon him. He lacked political courage to take lot of decisions.<sup>15</sup>

Still he could not satisfy Sita Ram Kesari who withdrew support from the government in November 1997. Gujarat resigned on November 28, since no party was in a position to form the government, the President dissolved the Lok Sabha on December 4, 1997<sup>16</sup> and ordered a mid-term poll which was held on February 16, 22, 28 and March 7, 1998.

For fighting the mid term poll three political alliances came into being. B.J.P. entered into alliance with Akali Dal, Shiv Sena, Haryana Vikas Party, Lok Shakti AIADMK, MDMK, Janta Party, Samta Party, Biju Janta Dal etc., the Congress allied with Rashtriya Janta Dal, Kerala Congress, IUML and Republican Party of India (RPI) and the national front consisted of Janta Dal, Tamil Manila Congress, D.M.K. Telgu Desam (Naidu), C.P.I., C.P.I. (M), Samajwadi Party, etc.

The election to the 12th Lok Sabha again resulted in a hung Lok Sabha. No Party or alliance gained majority. However the B.J.P. led alliance emerged with 264 seats, as the largest alliance in which B.J.P. had the largest number of seats (197). After hectic political activities, it became clear that B.J.P. alliance had more support and could form a stable government. Hence the President invited Atal Bihari Vajpayee to form the government.

Vajpayee was sworn in as prime minister for the second time on March 19, 1998<sup>17</sup> to lead the fourth coalition government at the centre. Immediately thereafter Atal Bihari Vajpayee started feeling the pangs of a coalition government. President, too was in a difficult position. Jayalalita started troubling Vajpayee from the day 1 and kept him on his toes on the one pretext or another. The whole year 1998 passed as a period of black-mailing by allies supporting Atal Bihari Vajpayee from inside or outside.<sup>18</sup>

All parties supporting the government were putting one demand or another everyday forcing Vajpayee for taking unworthy decisions or deferring decisions. However, when Jayalalita put three demands i.e. to sack defence minister George Fernandes, reinstatement of sacked Navy Chief Vishnu Bhagwat and setting up a joint parliamentary committee to probe into allegation made by George Fernandes against Bhagwat<sup>19</sup>. Vajpayee did not yield and the result was obvious. Jayalalita (the AIADMK) withdrew support from the government in the first week of April. Hence the President asked Atal Bihari Vajpayee to seek fresh vote of confidence. Vajpayee government was defeated by one vote to April 17, 1999 (269 votes in favour and 270 votes against the motion of confidence)<sup>20</sup>. The remark of Church bill that one is enough was

proved true in this voting.<sup>21</sup> The Vajpayee government resigned immediately but was asked by the President to continue till the new government was formed.

The President tried to find out a leader who could form the next government but he miserably failed in this attempt. The opposition parties which were able to remove Vajpayee from power, could not form an alternative government because they could not agree on who should lead the new government. Hence the President dissolved the 12th Lok Sabha on April 26,<sup>22</sup> as no government could be formed, Vajpayee continued working as care-taker Prime Minister till the formation of next government in October 1999.

After the dissolution of the 12th Lok Sabha, political parties started preparation for the election for the 13th Lok Sabha. There was clear indication since 1996 that the days of one party dominance in parliament were over and the days of hung Parliament started. Hence two main claimants of to the power, the B.J.P. and the Congress, set their feet on course of coalition politics, the B.J.P. with full vigour and the Congress only half heartedly. The B.J.P. formed a grand alliance of political parties as National Democratic Alliance (N.D.A.) on May 15, 1999. Atal Behari Vajpayee was elected leader of N.D.A. The main political parties forming the alliance were Janta Dal (United) Samta Party, Lok Shakti Party, Shiromani Akali Dal, Indian National Lok Dal (Haryana), D.M.K., MDMK, PMK, IMC, TRC, (All Tamil Naidu), Biju Janta Dal (Orissa), Shiv Sena (Maharashtra), Himanchal Pradesh Vikas Party (HP) etc. Some other parties Telugu Desam and Trinamool Congress (West Bengal) assured support from outside. The Congress reached electoral understanding with some political parties AIADMK, Rastriya Janta Dal (Bihar), Rastriya Lok Dal (U.P.), Kerala Congress, Muslim League etc. The third alliance of left parties was already there. Some other parties like Samajwadi Party, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) etc. decided to face the election on their own without any alliance or understanding with other parties.

The election to the 13th Lok Sabha was held on September 5, 11, 18, 25 and October 3. The seats won by different alliance and parties were as follows:

|   |                         |                                                          |
|---|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | NDA                     | 299 (including 182 of BJP)                               |
| 2 | Left Alliance           | 43                                                       |
| 3 | Congress Led Alliance   | 137 (including 112 of Congress)                          |
| 4 | Others and independents | 64 (including 26 of SP, 14 of B.S.P. and 5 independents) |
|   | <b>Total</b>            | <b>543</b>                                               |

This time the victory of NDA was so convincing that President K.R. Narayanan appointed Atal Bihari Vajpayee P.M. on October 11, 1999 without asking him to see any vote of confidence.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee was sworn in as prime minister for the third time on October 13, 1999<sup>24</sup> and formed the fifth coalition government at the centre. He successfully completed the five year term as prime minister of a coalition government which in itself was record of sorts. Atal Bihari Vajpayee got the Lok Sabha dissolved on February 6, 2004 a few months earlier than due.<sup>25</sup>

Atal Bihari Vajpayee successfully leading a coalition government for a full term performed the rarest of rare feat in the annals of parliamentary government. He proved that coalition government can be stable provided the parties forming the coalition observe coalition culture and work within the limits set by the agenda of coalition government better known as Common Minimum Programme (CMP). This besides several other factors led the Congress to think and feel that coalition politics was the need of the hour. Hence it declared its willingness and readiness to form coalition government. It, in fact, formed a coalition known as United Progressive Alliance (UPA) to fight the 2004 parliamentary poll as an alliance.

In the 2004, election, UPA won the majority. Shortly, thereafter Sonia Gandhi was nominated by the 19 Congress allies to be the next prime minister. But she declined to take the national top post and instead nominated an eminent economist, former Union Finance Minister and senior Congress leader, Dr. Man Mohan Singh for the post.<sup>26</sup> This was approved by the Congress parliamentary party and UPA partners. Hence he was sworn in as prime minister on May 22, 2004 to lead the sixth coalition government at the centre.<sup>27</sup>

Thus in all six coalition governments have been formed till this day, the sixth one led by Man Mohan Singh is still working.

#### POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

If we look at the working of coalition governments at the centre from 1996 to 2006, we shall not fail to identify certain political developments which have had deep influence on the course of constitutional development and working of constitutional agencies and institutions. Some of the very important among them are described below:-

(A) The tradition of outside support to a minority government started with Indira Gandhi who took outside support from C.P.I. and others when her government became a minority government after the Congress split in 1969. Since then different prime minister from Indira Gandhi to Man Mohan Singh who headed minority governments, took outside support from different parties and dealt differently with the parties supporting from outside. Different political parties supporting the minority government dealt with different prime minister differently according to the political situations in which they (P.M.) were placed.

For example, Indira Gandhi, whose minority government heavily depended upon the

outside support of the C.P.I. and others, had to make compromises on many issues of policies and programmes for surviving as prime minister. Ultimately, fed up with the pressure exerted by these parties she dissolved the Lok Sabha in 1970 and ordered fresh poll one year earlier in 1971, instead of 1972. Charan Singh, V.P. Singh, Chandra Shekher, Deva Gowda and I.K. Gujral had to resign from the prime ministership when the parties supporting from outside withdrew their support from the government, B.J.P. in the case of V.P. Singh and Congress in the case of others. Narsimha Rao converted his minority government into a majority government by persuading, pressurizing or purchasing some MP's belonging to other parties notably Jharkhand Mukti Morcha. According to Dr. Subhash Kashyap, the term of ninth Lok Sabha (1989-91) in which two minority governments were installed, was the period in which the great institution of Lok Sabha sank to the lowest depths and rules and regulations of the house were ignored.<sup>28</sup> However the ugly face of the outside support was visible only after 1996 when prime ministers were forced to resign or make unhealthy compromises with the parties supporting from outside. Outside support has emerged as an institution in the era of coalition politics. Man Mohan Singh is surviving as prime minister on the outside support of left parties.

As an institution, the outside support has proved a bane in Indian politics because it affected the position of prime minister and functioning of government. Our experience with outside support has not been very encouraging. In fact the aim of extending outside support to a minority government was never pure. For example the aim behind CPI's extending support to the Indira Gandhi government in 1969 was to strengthen the leftist elements in the Congress led by Indira Gandhi. Similarly Indira Gandhi's aim in giving outside support to Charan Singh was not to enable Charan Singh to run the government but to make way for mid term poll.<sup>29</sup>

Outside support has not had a good record in our parliamentary history. Venkataraman says that "Indira Gandhi's support to Charan Singh and her withdrawal of support within three weeks were ugly precedents in our parliamentary history."<sup>30</sup>

President Venkataraman was very cautious when Rajiv Gandhi offered outside support to Chandra Shekhar in 1990 in forming a minority government. He agreed to invite Chandra Shekhar to form the government, when Rajiv Gandhi gave an assurance that he would not withdraw support at least for a year. It was only after this assurance that the President became convinced that Chandra Shekhar would form a viable government.<sup>31</sup> Hence, when Rajiv Gandhi withdrew support from the government just after three months, the President was very sorry for Chandra Shekhar. After the resignation of Chandra Shekhar in 1991 Rajiv Gandhi tried to constitute new government with the outside support but he President declined.<sup>32</sup>

According to Madhu Limaye Charan Singh's biggest mistake was to accept Indira Gandhi's treacherous support in 1997. Chandra Shekhar committed the same mistake in

1990.33 History repeated itself when Deve Gowda and I.K. Gujral accepted the outside support of the Congress in 1996 and 1997 respectively and met the same fate. However the practice is still continuing through Vajpayee government to Man Mohan Singh government: They accepted outside support from T.D.P. and left parties respectively.

(B) Coalition politics has brought about significant change in the nature of our political parties by forcing national parties like the Congress and the B.J.P. to come close to regional and state parties like the D.M.K., the Akali Dal, the Telugu Desam, and the A.G.P. etc for the purpose of forming government. This has, on the one hand enabled the national Parties to better understand the local aspirations of the people which the regional and smaller parties represent and promote and on the other, offered ample opportunities to smaller parties to participate in decision making at the national level. In this way both regional and national parties have been benefited. Both have become realistic and pragmatic in their approaches. This has led to politics of compromise conciliation and consensus.

(C) Coalition politics has been a cause and an effect of hung Lok Sabha. The phenomenon of hung Lok Sabha has influenced the functioning of several of our constitutional institutions and created many administrative problems.<sup>34</sup>

(D) For historical reasons, coalition politics was born out of negative approach to politics. Since no political party found itself able to defeat Congress, many parties opposed to the Congress like Congress (O) etc. joined hands on anti-Congress front and formed the Janta Party. There was nothing common among these parties except that they were opposed to the Congress party and Indira Gandhi. So they followed anti-congressism to the extent to dismissing nine Congress ruled states, dismissing governors and sending Indira Gandhi to jail. Similarly, U.P.A. was born out of anti N.D.A. plank the only thing that is keeping U.P.A. united is anti N.D.A. plank. This negative politics has given birth to certain very unhealthy trends in Indian Politics such as political vendetta, witch hunting, misuse of investigative agencies, opening and closing of criminal cases against political leaders with an eye on political gains, naming and renaming of the schemes and institutions announced and reversing decisions taken by the former government. The list is unending because it goes on increasing with the passage of time. Moreover, the trend has percolated the states and local bodies at a great financial cost to the people.

#### IMPACT ON THE WORKING OF THE CONSTITUTION

The above changes introduced in our body politic by coalition politics have influenced the working of our Constitution in several aspects. We discuss below some of the most important among them:

1. Our Constitution makers had hoped that in due course of time some constitution conventions would be developed which would fill the gaps in the constitution and ensure smooth working of our parliamentary system. Only a few conventions were developed during one party Congress rule regarding the appointment of governors or constitutional responsibility of ministers such as consultation with state governments regarding appointment of governors or minister's resignation due to some wrong done by his ministry. All these conventions have been thrown to winds; persons with criminal records have been made ministers; staunch party leaders have been appointed governors without any consultation with the state government. But coalition politics has led to the emergence of some new conventions too. Both Atal Behari Vajpayee and Man Mohan Singh have followed certain principles about consulting opposition parties and coalition allies on policy issue which had led to the emergence of politics of consensus. Side by side speakers, opposition parties and President have helped in the evolution of some healthy conventions. Our President have been able to lay certain healthy conventions in this era. The Presidents strictly followed the practice of inviting the largest party to form the government. This was done in 1989, 1991, 1998 and 1999, then it has also become a convention of our constitutional arrangement to allow a care-taker government to get budgetary provisions passed and all opposition parties pass them without any cut motion or amendment. Another healthy convention developed during this era is that we allow a care-taker government to function as a full fledged government if the country is facing any emergency. The care-taker government of Atal Behari Vajpayee fought Kargil war with full vigour and confidence without facing any disability of a care-taker government.

2. Some of the practices and conventions developed during coalition era have changed the role and status of several legal and constitutional agencies in the Constitution such as President, Governor, Leader of the House etc. For example they have changed the relation between the President and the Prime Minister. In Pre-coalition era prime Minister was all powerful and the President behaved as a constitutional head of state; in coalition era, due to weak and uncertain position of Prime Minister, Presidents have had courage to dictate to Prime Ministers. For example, President Reddy did not allow Prime Minister Charan Singh to address the nation after he failed to get majority support in the Lok Sabha. Similarly President Venkatraman did not allow care-taker Prime Ministers. V.P. Singh and Chandra Shekhar to use many a privilege of a regular Prime Minister<sup>36</sup> and he also did not allow, as already discussed. Rajiv Gandhi to form government with outside support after the resignation of Chandra Shekhar in 1990.

3. The Coalition politics has changed the nature of our parliamentary government. There has emerged a new model of parliamentary government in which Prime Minister. Man Mohan Singh is looking after administrative affairs and party president. Sonia Gandhi after political

affaris.<sup>37</sup> This has weakened the position of Prime Minister who, unlike pre-coalition days, suffers from many limitations in matters related to the composition and functioning of his council of ministers. This process of weakening the position of Prime Minister started in 1996 when Deve Gowda had to appoint the nominees of the coalition parties without questioning and continued through Gujral and Vajpayee. In the present coalition government led by the Congress, the position of Prime Minister has suffered further decline in that there is sharing of Prime Minister's authority between the Congress President Sonia Gandhi and Prime Minister Man Mohan Singh in which Sonia Gandhi occupies superior position.<sup>38</sup> This superior position of Sonia Gandhi has been variously referred to as de-facto Prime Minister.<sup>39</sup> super Prime Minister<sup>40</sup> maximum prime minister's authority, there has emerged a new pattern of parliamentary government which is purely Indian in form and content both,

4. Coalition politics has highlighted some of the glaring inadequacies in our constitutional arrangement. For example, firstly it has been made amply clear by recent developments that the president is utterly helpless to check the political instability in the face of hung parliament; the President can do no more than forming minority government and dissolving the Lok Sabha. There is no end to the problem. Secondly the Constitution gives undue authority to the state governments to go on ignoring, even challenging the authority of central government without any punishment. Many state governments refused to implement a central legislation – POTA. Thirdly article 365 (no doubt misused on certain occasions) which has been a potent force hitherto, to discipline a recalcitrant state government has been rendered useless by the recent developments. The union government imposed president rule in U.P. and Bihar but due to stiff opposition from the President and Rajya Sabha, it had to retrace steps and the President's rule had to be withdrawn. In these circumstances, state governments have been behaving irresponsibly. That is why it has been observed that the Indian Constitution breeds anarchy.<sup>42</sup>

5. Coalition politics has reemphasized the importance of Rajya Sabha because as seen above, a coalition government may cobble disparate parties to gain majority support and yet may not be able to sail smoothly in the Rajya Sabha and may face rough weather there as I.K. Gujral and Vajpayee governments did in the cases of U.P. and Bihar.

6. Coalition politics has started new constitutional practices and conventions to make the government run successfully. Notable among them are Common Minimum Programme, Coordination Committee, National Advisory Council, Vote of confidence etc. These institutions and practices have had important bearing on the relation between the President and P.M. between the parliament and P.M. and between the P.M. and other constituents of coalition government.

7. Coalition politics has clarified the position and character of care-taker government. The

care-taker government led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee fought Kargil war, imposed taxes etc. like a regular government. Now it is accepted that a care-taker government suffers from no limitation and can face any emergency like a regular government.

8. Coalition politics has strengthened our federal polity. State governments, which during one party Congress rule, were treated like municipalities and their chief ministers like nominees or appointees of central government acquired a new sense of importance and independent identity as envisaged under the Constitution. Now the Union government is not in a position to dictate to the state governments and change chief ministers at will. The state governments are in a position to discuss various issues with the union government with new confidence and force it to abandon its dictatorial attitude and reach compromise with the state governments run by its allies or opposition parties. And when due to rigid or unbending attitude of either union government or the state government a compromise could not be possible as in case of Pota or school text books, the state governments followed a different policy from that of the Union government.

#### PROBLEMS AND DANGERS

The coalition politics has created a number of problems for politics and administration like delay in decision making and implementation, poor coordination at political level, erosion of ministerial responsibility, wastage of time and resources in managing unmanageable ministers and parties, instability, confusion in centre state relation, growth of extra constitutional centres of power etc. Some of these are fraught with grave dangers for the future.

The growth of extra constitutional centres of power during coalition era R.S.S. during Vajpayee's period and chairman of the National Advisory Council during Man Mohan Singh's period has led to the weakening of Prime Minister's authority. This is evident from the fact that Man Mohan Singh is just a dignified proxy without enjoying the right to appoint or remove members of either the prime minister's office or the council of ministers.<sup>43</sup> He is reported to be helpless not only before the party President Sonia Gandhi whose wishes he carries out most faithfully but he also accepts the decisions and diktats of those said to have Sonia's era.<sup>44</sup> This is pathetic and humiliating for any prime minister more so far an honest and efficient prime minister like Man Mohan Singh. Moreover, it is dangerous for the country because now major decisions are no longer in the domain of P.M.O., they are taken by U.P.A. chairperson. 45 A clash between the constitutional and the unconstitutional centres of power, which is not unlikely would prove disastrous for governance.

The constitutional practices and institutions like Coordination Committee, National Advisory Council have adversely affected the authority and functioning of Prime Minister and his council of ministers. Most of the principles on which a parliamentary government functions

such as leadership of prime minister, compact council of minister and their responsibility to parliament, collective responsibility etc. have been undermined by the above institutions. Many a time the decisions taken by the council of ministers are changed under pressure from various quarters, notably coalition partners. The change in the government stand on disinvestments in PSU is a pointer in this regard.

As prime minister of coalition government is always busy pacifying and mollifying the coalition partners, he finds little time to attend to the serious business of government with the result that judicial intervention has increased in important segments of administration.<sup>46</sup> The recent judicial pronouncements on matters related to jhuggi, slumdwellers, sealing of commercial establishments, etc may be cited as examples. In order to show their importance in the government, the coalition partners have openly attacked the functioning of independent constitutional and legal authorities like Election Commission, Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG), CBI etc. and charges of mala-fide intention and partiality have been leveled against them. Members of council of ministers and speaker Somnath Chatterjee doubted the authority of Supreme Court when the latter took cognizance and issued notices to Jharkhand Governor regarding his role in government formation there. This trend to attack, belittle and denigrate the independent constitutional agencies, which are watchdogs of government, poses a grave danger not only to parliamentary government but also to democracy itself. Actually ministers like Lalu Prasad Yadav are certain to wreck the system from within.<sup>47</sup> The coalition politics seems to be heading to an era of confrontation between the constitutional authorities. Some of the recent observations and judgments of the Supreme Court like those related to IMDT Act, Governor's role in Jharkhand and Bihar and reservation in private unaided professional colleges have created situations of confrontation between judiciary and executive. Giving vent to its anguish the Supreme Court went to the extent of calling government intolerant and incapable of understanding the importance of its judgments. A visibly hurt Chief Justice R.C. Lahoti told Attorney General Milan K. Banerjee, "Tell us we will wind up the courts and then do whatever you want."<sup>48</sup> Similarly, feeling hurt and humiliated by some remarks of Lalu Prasad Yadav regarding their impartiality and fairness election commissioner met the President to register their protest and seek President's help.<sup>49</sup> Sri Krishnamurti, the then Chief Election Commissioner, expressed concern over such attempt which may lead to politicization of the Commission.<sup>50</sup> Undesired and uncalled for controversy over Legislative versus judiciary was initiated by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha himself in the backdrop of some of the observations made and orders issued in respect of sittings of Jharkhand Assembly.<sup>51</sup> Similarly, there has been a tendency on the part of government to govern by circulars and rules. If this is allowed to continue, every new government will issue fresh guidelines and instructions. That would result in chaos and poor governance.<sup>52</sup>

## WAT OUT

One party rule has become a thing of the past and we have to carry on with coalition governments in future. Coalition governments, as we have discussed above, have created many problems, which may prove dangerous, even catastrophic in certain situations In this situation we are left with no choice but to find out ways and means to ensure smooth working of coalition government in future. Various constitutional experts and leaders have come up with a number of suggestions in this regard. A few of them are discussed below:-

- 1- The Lok Sabha should have a fixed term so that it may not be dissolved before the due date.<sup>53</sup> This would solve many problems- political administrative, financial and others which are created by the uncertainty associated with likely dissolution of Lok Sabha.
- 2- Smaller regional political parties should be kept out of national politics because they have more than often posed problems for good governance.<sup>54</sup> As a factor the regional parties create such individualistic syndrome as Karunanidhi-Jayalalita, Lalu Yadava-Mulayam Singh Yadava, Mayawati and Mulayam Singh Yadava, Bal Thakre etc. who try to protect their individual interests without any consideration for larger national interests. The regional parties moreover always promote their regional agenda at the cost of national agends.<sup>55</sup>
- 3- The President should stop the practice of asking a newly appointed Prime Minister to seek vote of confidence in the Lok Sabha within a stipulated period of time. Experts are of the view that there is no mention of vote of confidence in the Constitution, or Law or even in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of business in the Lok Sabha. It is harmful in that it gives unnecessary authority to the President to meddle in the organization and working of government. Had the President not asked the Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to seek vote of confidence in 1999, the fall of government by one vote and all that followed there after could have been avoided. Constitutional experts feel that the President's job is to appoint a Prime Minister who in his opinion has majority in the Lok Sabha and is likely to give a stable government, it is not his job to ask him (P.M.) to prove his majority in the Lok-Sabha and that it is right and duty of the opposition to move a motion of no-confidence against a Prime Minister if it feels that he does not have majority. A former President R. Venkataraman holds that the President should not have asked Vajpayee to seek vote of confidence.<sup>56</sup>
- 4- No-confidence motion should accompany with the name of the new Prime Minister in case the motion is carried. Alarmed at the fall of Vajpayee government by one vote in 1999 and failure of the opposition to be able to form an alternative government many eminent people have come with such a suggestion, on the lines of such a practice in some of European countries to ensure stability in the era of coalition politics The Law Commission in a radical proposal has suggested that if a government falls by no confidence vote, the opposition leader

automatically becomes the prime minister and forms the new government. N.M. Ghatare, former chairman of law Commission, told reporters that the Law commission, basing its recommendation on the German model, has suggested in its 170th report that a no-confidence motion moved by opposition should be accompanied by a confidence motion reposing confidence in the leader of the opposition. He said that the system would fit into the spirit of the Constitution as it would not require any change or amendment of the constitution or any laws; it only requires a minor change in Rule No. 198 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Lok Sabha.<sup>57</sup>

5- The practice to extend outside support to minority or coalition government should be discouraged. The cause of untimely death of the governments led by Charan Singh, V.P. Singh, Chandra Shekhar, Deve Gowd and I.K. Gujral was the sudden withdrawal of the outside support by B.J.P. in case of V.P. Singh and by the Congress in all other cases,<sup>58</sup> if the withdrawal of outside support by the Congress was the cause of downfall of the coalition governments of Deve Gowda and Gujral, the continuation of outside support by the left of Man Mohan Singh is disastrous particularly to the economic reforms which are so badly needed to take India forward as a global power.

6- The practice to appoint a jumbo cabinet to accommodate MP's changing parties just for political position and power should be banned by law. Thanks to the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government, this objective has been already achieved by 97th Constitution Amendment Act enacted in 2003 which limited the size of Council of Ministers and debarred defectors from joining the ministry. However politicians have found ways and means to overcome the limitations. This should be looked into.

7- Since the governors are in very embarrassing position and face cross-firing from state governments and Union government when they belong to different political parties. It has been suggested that clear cut rules should be framed regarding their appointment, tenure etc. so that they do not function under the threats of Union or State government. Governors like Dharm Veer, Romesh Bhandari, Sunder Singh Bhandari, Vinod Kumar Pandey, Fatima Beevi to name just a few, faced very uncomfortable even humiliating situation during their tenures. We have waited too long for convention. Now it is necessary to frame some rules regarding the appointment and functioning of governors.

8- It has been suggested that Lok Sabha should be involved in the selection of Prime Minister. Justice Seervai has suggested that the Prime Minister should be selected by Lok Sabha by a majority vote. If no candidate gets majority of votes in the first voting, the second voting should be resorted to select one from the top two persons selected in the first voting.<sup>59</sup>

9- The government i.e. the executive must realize that it is only one component of the

state and not the state itself. It must not bypass the Legislature by issuing circulars and rules as and when it wants. Some people say that compulsions of coalition politics hamper legislature since the government does not have the numbers in parliament. But this can not be accepted as an excuse for inaction; It must draft and get passed necessary laws to address the pressing problems of the nation.<sup>60</sup>

10- As none of the suggestions is acceptable to all, a sort of national debate is on these suggestions. This is likely to go on until and unless one, two or many of them are made part of our political system either through constitutional amendment or judicial verdicts or well established conventions. However, we are sure to find out remedies to the maladies from which our political system is affected at present. It may be advisable to appoint a committee of experts to examine the above suggestions and make its recommendations.

#### **CONCLUSION :**

As may be inferred from the above analysis, the era of coalition government has given both positive and negative signals. We should catch hold of positive signals like understanding and cooperation among regional and national political parties, common minimum programme, coordination committee, politics of consensus, culture of coalition politics etc. and try to evolve a unique model of parliamentary government something like 'Popular National Government' which will be most suited to our multi-cultural, multi-religious polity. If however, God forbid, we succumb to the degenerating forces unleashed by the era of coalition politics like pressure tactics, black-mailing, criminalization of politics, politicization of criminals, misuse of power for economic and political gains, nepotism, casteism, communalism etc. then not only democracy is doomed in the country but our survival as a constitutional state will be also in doubt. Thus our political system is on trial. We have to prove that we are fit for democracy and constitutional government.

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59. Quoted by Pran Chopra Unto Parliament II' Hindustan Times, Lucknow, May 10, 1996, p.6.
60. Vijai Jindal Op. Cit, p.7.

## POSTMODERN INDIA ? THE NATION IN SPITE OF FRAGMENTS

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*Though nation-states have been subjected to the homogenizing forces of globalization and market economy, India as a nation-state has grown in strength. At a time when nationlessness is the norm rather than an exception, India's unitary structure as a masternarrative has successfully challenged the little narratives of regionalism and dissent. The clue may be found in India's geopolitical location and civilizational/ideological divide it has with its neighbors. This history makes India perpetually conscious of external threat perceptions, thus making India one. In spite of the internal division between secular and hindu nationalism, represented by Congress and BJP respectively, India is perceived as one nation, secular or hindu, by its enemies. Since India's history is inextricably related to its dark enemy Pakistan, India's national consciousness continues to be both unified and uniform.*

It is quite audacious to talk about nation-states and nationalism in an age when every facet of human experience seems to be relegated to globalized market economy. It is commonly believed that as transnational companies (TNCs) advance, nation-states decline. Late capitalism and its progeny postmodernism, it is said, have brought about major paradigm shifts in postcolonial societies like India. India's acceptance of liberalized economy in the nineties, introduction of foreign direct investments (FDIs) in virtually every sector, and mass migration of Indians to every corner of the world may tempt us to believe that nation-state is on the wane. But it is quite naive to write of nation state, culture, identity and history, given the fact that India is not, and cannot be one, a postmodern society in spite of all those factors that constitute postmodernism.

My attempt here is to prove the masternarrative of nation as a compulsion, which lives in every Indian's psyche in varied and often conflicting conditions. This finding is based on recent political events involving India, and the warring ideologies of different political parties. Ever since our tryst with destiny(read India's independence) in 1947 that legitimated our existence as a secular nation-state, yet left enough reason in the formation of Pakistan to question that very basis of secularism, nation and nationalism continue to haunt us. It is not possible to know for certain whether nationalism emerged in colonies in response to its European formation or vice versa, it is beyond doubt that a postcolonial society like India could not and now cannot live without external threat perceptions - real or imaginary. We are because others are not. These threat perceptions make the nation i.e. India, in spite of fragments.

Derrida might have challenged the existence of logos or any 'transcendental signified' in the study of human sciences, but the same does not apply to the lived experience in India. The present Indian experience shows that centralized power of the nation-state or logos has successfully undermined and delegitimated every kind of resistant voice. Indian nation-state as a transcendent entity has not only represented itself as a metanarrative but has successfully

silenced little narratives of regional concerns. Lyotard's clarion call to put an end to all masternarratives has not been realized in India so far, nor will it in near future.

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries have given us as much terror as we can take. We have paid a high enough price for the nostalgia of the whole and the one .... Let us wage a war on totality. Let us activate the differences .... (Lyotard 82)

Godhra<sup>1</sup> carnage and the subsequent reign of terror, numberless communal riots, conversions and retaliations, have proved beyond doubt that we have not yet refined "our sensitivity to differences ... and ability to tolerate the incommensurable" (Lyotard xxv). A strong centre with a unitary structure (federal in theory) reinscribes our faith in what Derrida calls the 'metaphysics of presence'. As states and individuals are required to respect 'national interests' (a good phrase that has become a cliché) even against their rights, we have an authoritative centre that can punish erring states (Article 356 of Indian Constitution<sup>2</sup>) and individuals (POTA<sup>3</sup> or like). Thus what we have in India is more a modernist kind of nation-state that justifies the tyranny of the norm and represents the victory of the central over the regional or individual.

Nation as an absent 'Presence' and a metaphor of material conditions has implications for a kind of politics that is against postmodern ideas. If postmodernism entails decentering of authority, India is still stuck in modern or even premodern structure of authority and power. Political decentering of logos, which according to Richard Kearney, involves cosmopolitanism and regional autonomy has never been realized in India so far. For Kearney, "genuine internationalism (working at a global level) and critical regionalism (working at a local level) represent ... two sides of a postmodern alternative" (Kearney 583). So far as internationalism is concerned, India cannot embrace that idea, at least in Asia, with neighbours like Pakistan, Bangladesh and China. We, as a people, have always been obsessed with civilizational and ideological others (Pakistan and Bangladesh) and racial and ideological others (China, even Nepal). We cannot live with these others, yet cannot exist without them. It is not like postmodern identity in difference, rather an identity in negation and hatred. Our being a nation is predicated on our capacity to hate and maximize differences, in spite of recent peace initiatives with our neighbours. Internationalism with our neighbours will not work simply because as a distinct nation we cannot live without history and past. Nor our colonial past will let us embrace Euro-American 'friends' in totality.

The second aspect, i.e. regionalism, is yet to be a viable alternative to the power that our constitution invests in the centre. Regionalism may emerge for any purpose but tolerance and there will always be a political angle to it. The demand for Telengana<sup>4</sup> will be acceptable as long as it pays political dividends. Kashmir's autonomy<sup>5</sup> may be considered, but not before the

centre is forced by the 'international community'. Immediately after coming to power the UPA<sup>6</sup> government sacked the governors of Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana and Goa, since they were appointed by the NDA<sup>7</sup> government. The NDA too, during its tenure, did its bit in rolling the heads of Congress governors. Manohar Parrikar government in Goa was toppled and in Jharkhand, Governor Syed Razi appointed Shibu Soren as the Chief Minister even though the latter did not have the majority. All these, and many more, indicate delegitimation of India's federal structure and establish the centre as a totalizing power.

Nation and state, in theory, are two different concepts. State refers to a geographical territory with apparatuses like legislative, executive, judiciary, citizenship, national flag etc. and demands its citizens to be loyal. Thus secessionists in Kashmir, Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram etc. have Indian passports even though they fight Indian sovereignty tooth and nail. Unlike 'state' which is recognized by the UN, nation is a cultural artefact to which one emotionally belongs. Thus we had Khalistan and now Kashmir nation, Assom nation, Naga nation, that the separatists want to convert to states. In case of Pakistan, as in European states, it was a state before it was a nation. In India, heterogeneties notwithstanding, we had a nation against the British imperialism that was made a state after decolonization. A democratically elected representative govt. made the difference between nation and state disappear. Though nations, these days, are associated with culture and ethnicity, it still remains inseparable from the state in India.

Though critics of nationalism brand it as "a deeply contradictory enterprise" (Sarup 149), it invokes a kind of homogenized consciousness in spite of political ambiguities. On February 13, 2005 an article was published in an Oriya (a regional language of India) daily The Samaj by Dhaneswar Mohapatra, a famous linguist and social anthropologist. Translated into English the title of the article would be "Intellectual Superstition". Mr Mohapatra lambasted the assumptions on which our national consciousness and the very idea of India as a nation were based. Exposing intellectuals' obsession with a glorious, hoary past, he called this 'intellectual superstition'. As expected there was a backlash and Mr. Mohapatra had to seek police protection after receiving threat calls. The debate continued with more intellectuals joining that superstition. Whenever the question of Bangladeshi immigrants comes, we condemn them for destroying our forest covers and patronising terrorism, and we do it for the sake of the nation. Defense deals are made in the name of national security and if subsequently any loopholes are found, various commissions are set up to find the culprit and ensure the security of the nation. If we stop making arms supply to Nepal and then revoke it<sup>8</sup>, both are said to be in the interest of the nation. If we demonize Pakistan President Musharaf for orchestrating Kargil<sup>9</sup> and then embrace him as a messiah of peace, both are believed to benefit the nation. National interest and security have become the most powerful tropes of Indian life. Even a television advertisement for Surf Excel (a washing

powder) persuades potential consumers to use the product and save two buckets of water for the nation, thus subordinating market economy to nationalism. There are films and tele serials valorizing Indian armed forces fighting enemies and insurgents. Not only political and legislative decisions, common life and incidents have become national allegories.

Why so? When India is just next to China in attracting FDIs, and multinational companies (MNCs) have successfully colonized our middle class mind, it is a bit problematic to find the answer. Normally capitalism reduces everything to profit and undermines national spirit. Desire for swadeshi (everything indigenous) is replaced by need-based foreign products, and classical music is replaced by M TV. Coca-colonization creates a mindset that does not wish to be confined to national borders, and does not mind to explode the national cocoon. In a way, the very idea of nation is marketed for mass consumption, and becomes a part of culture industry. The narrative of the nation is linked to the progress of political parties like Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Congress (India shining campaign by NDA and advertisement for UPA's one year in office<sup>10</sup>) and is aimed at the same end like market economy – general consumption. TNCs authorize nationlessness and work for the "demotion of the nation-state to the status of a resident unit of economic exchange in the global economy" (Pease 1). The operation of TNCs in postcolonial societies make the nation nebulous and undefined. Instead of creating a unitary consciousness, it creates a class society, dividing it into those who use products and those who do not. It does not unify, it fragments. Masao Miyoshi, a critic of nation-state, equates the triumph of TNCs to colonialism and believes that instead of bringing independence to Third World countries, decolonization tightened the Euro-American grip on their economy.

But all the above observations fail to address Indian peculiarity. Masao Miyoshi knew that profit or use of consumer goods could make people forget their nation up to a certain limit. People get divided in the absence of a common enemy and when they are without any cause to fight and die for. America had such a crisis after the end of the cold war. The enemy being gone people divided themselves along the lines of race, ethnicity, sexuality etc. Miyoshi got it right when he said, "war activates nationalism and patriotism in as much as hostility deepens the chasm that cuts "them" off from "us" " (Miyoshi 742-743). It is the other, real or perceived, that constitutes the self and this definition of the self by the negation of the other is quite common among humans. The absence of the other, thus, can endanger identity politics. This other is either civilizational or racial or ideological whose existence threatens the very being of the self.

Huntington, in his book *Who Are We?* argues that American identity was at stake after the disintegration of the USSR until the World Trade Centre attack. Osama Bin Laden's appearance ended American search for a potent enemy. The September 11 attack "restored the

primacy of national identity over other identities for virtually all Americans" (Huntington 108, 2004). But India as a nation has never been free from the spectre of Pakistan. Both India and Pakistan justify their identity through the other's negation. Pakistan, as a state, was based on two-nation theory and exclusivity and was created not in the name of people, but in the name of religion and God. It was God's Holy Land and Kafirs (non-believers) had no place in Allah's schemes. Even muslims migrating to Pakistan from India during partition were mohajirs (migrants, implying inferiority), not quite complete muslims because of their birth in the enemy land. According to two-nation theory<sup>11</sup> Kashmir should have been in Pakistan and not in India, the latter vulgarising Islam by going for a secular state. India was the negation of two-nation theory and Pakistan was seen by India as the veritable symbol of betrayal and religious fanaticism. Maharaja Hari Singh's accession of muslim-dominated Kashmir<sup>12</sup> proved India's secular credentials and furthered the religious-secular divide. Thus India and Pakistan as each other's ideological opposite marched ahead in time through wars, infiltration and suspicion, but never forgetting the other. Nation-state in India and Pakistan never declined, because of religious and military regimes in Pakistan, and in spite of liberalized economy in India. Wars with Pakistan kept our nationalism alive. As Huntington said, "we know who we are only when we know who we are not and often only when we know whom we are against" (Huntington 21, 1996).

Contrary to Masao Miyoshi who believed in the disappearance of the nation-state under TNCs, Huntington, quite gloomily, predicted that "nation states remain the principal actors in world affairs" (Huntington 21, 1996). The clash of civilization theory is an irresponsible, yet a practical one, if the present trends are any indication. Cold war was the war of ideology. But once the USSR fell and there were no ideological frontiers to be conquered, America's foreign policy tilted towards civilizational fault lines. Global politics moved beyond ideology and were replaced by the clash of civilizations. But while advocating this theory in 1996, Huntington did not have many events to support his claim, other than the Gulf War. Now that Afghanistan has fallen, Saddam's Iraq has crumbled, and the countdown has already begun for Iran, Huntington's worst fears are getting confirmed: "The revitalization of religion throughout much of the world is reinforcing these cultural differences" (Huntington 28-29, 1996). And we in India know it better since all the wars that Pakistan waged against India were wars of religion and confirmed Pakistan's faith in two-religion/two-nation theory. Since Kashmir was the bone of contention, from Pakistan's point of view, the wars were not between two states but between a predominantly Hindu nation and an Islamic one.

Unlike America, India had a constant threat perception since its independence. The external threat was a hostile Pakistan, but also communist China after 1962. Immediately after the partition, both India and Pakistan saw each other as enemies. We were Indians because we

were up against Pakistan. There is no enemy like a parted brother and we never accepted what is not us. Pakistan as a state was a constant reminder of 'loss' that justified its being an evil state. But after India's crushing victory in 1971 that led to the creation of Bangladesh, Pakistan seemed to have accepted its defeat. The enemy being temporarily out of sight, we started defining ourselves in terms of race, ethnicity, language and religion. Thus we had Emergency, Khalistan movement, North-Eastern insurgency and linguistic conflicts in South India. Still these subnational identities never lost sight of Pakistan's new way of waging war against India, through infiltration and state-sponsored terrorism. The beginning of liberalization could not subside national sentiments. Ironically Prime Minister Narsimha Rao's liberalization era coincided with the rise in intense infiltration and terrorism. Wars and proxy wars thus concretized India and turned Indian people into a nation.

In 1947, 1965 and 1971 Pakistan fought wars with India, and by and large these wars with Pakistan were ideological – theocratic Pakistan versus a secular India. The Prime Ministers of India during the three wars were Nehru, Shastri and Indira Gandhi, who believed in India's secular credentials. But the Kargil war of 1999 was civilizational and was fought between Hindu and Muslim nations. India's Prime Minister was A.B. Vajpayee, an RSS pracharak<sup>13</sup> and Musharaf, the then Pakistan Army Chief, a religious hawk. For India it was a chance to avenge the plane hijacking that had seen the release of Maulana Masood Azhar<sup>14</sup>, a Pakistan based terrorist. The Kargil war made all the regional issues in India vanish and made people one. Charity cricket matches were played; Nana Patekar (a Bollywood movie star) went to the front to fight Pakistanis; people donated money to keep the war going and blood for the wounded soldiers; patriotic songs and music were played on television and a fledgling NDA government consolidated its position. Martyrdoms of Indian soldiers hailing from various states made people forget their regional and linguistic differences. Bereaved parents of dead soldiers proclaimed that they were proud to have begotten such children who could sacrifice their lives for the cause of the nation. Prior to the war, India led by BJP had tested nuclear bombs at Pokhran which established India's pride as a Hindu nation. Pakistan retaliated with Islamic bombs at Chhagai Hills and Abdul Quadeer Khan, the father of nuclear research in Pakistan, travelled to Iran and other countries to share nuclear technology that may unite Islamic nations. Kargil war was a war of identity; in fact India was in need of such a war to be a stronger nation-state.

Not much has changed after the Kargil war. The recent talks between Manmohan Singh and Pervez Musharaf should not be misread as the end of hostility. The whole show is not propelled by love for peace or the realization in the futility of war, but by the invigilation of the American President. We should not forget that Kargil occurred after the much-hyped bus to Lahore carrying Indian PM Vajpayee. Even President Musharaf, in his last visit to India,

acknowledged that his change of heart (naya dil laya hoon) is the fall out of the changed global order after September 11. And let's not ignore that just before the historic Mujaferabad-Srinagar (connecting Pakistan with India) bus service, a tourist center was razed by militants. Pakistan Foreign Minister Kasuri threatened to seek UN resolution on Kashmir if India showed 'obduracy' regarding Hurriyat<sup>15</sup> leaders' visit to Pakistan. Attacks on Indian Parliament and Akshardham temple are still fresh in the minds of Indian people. The former was an attack on India, the secular state and the latter an attack on the Hindu nation. That is not all. Hurriyat leader Yasin Mallick has admitted that Pakistani Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmad set up a terrorist camp, where 3500 jihadis(holy warriors) were trained in guerilla warfare to fight against India. Now that Pakistan's evil designs show no sign of abatement, Bangladesh, another brother is gradually coming forward revolting against Indian sovereignty and proving to be a safe haven for terrorist operations. The massacre of 16 BSF men in Assam by Bangladesh Rifles and the recent killing of an Indian soldier Jeevan Kumar roused emotions. That Bangladesh is going Pakistan way is beyond doubt. Strategists believe that it is nurturing hopes to create a greater Bangladesh by annexing parts of Assam and Bihar, two states of India. LTTE<sup>16</sup> in Sri Lanka has started acquiring aircrafts for operations against the Sri Lankan army, and Indian officials see this as a security threat. Maoists in Nepal are against Indian hegemony and have links with Naxals<sup>17</sup> in India. Then there is the ever enigmatic big brother China, sharing a part of POK<sup>18</sup> with Pakistan, which remains a villain in Indian psyche after 1962 invasion. These threat perceptions will never let people forget the nation they belong to. As long as 'others' remain, we cannot stop being 'we the nation'. The sense of living in a hostile world will continue to differentiate us from others with other religions and histories.

But there are some apparent fragments. Huntington distinguished between two kinds of nationalisms: political and cultural. In this formulation, the first is seen as progressive, multicultural, cosmopolitan and the latter as regressive, atavistic and mono cultural.

The good, civic nationalism, assumes an open society based, at least in theory, on a social contract to which people of any race or ethnicity are able to subscribe and thus become citizens. Ethnic nationalism, in contrast, is exclusive, and membership in the nation is limited to those who share certain primordial, ethnic or cultural characteristics. (my italics, Huntington 29, 2004)

Nationalism in India may be broadly divided on these lines. The secular political model is claimed to be represented by Congress Party and the latter is represented by Bharatiya Janata Party. However, this division does not encompass all political and cultural affiliations. Huntington's phrase 'at least in theory' in the above quotation, adequately captures the duplicitous secular politics of Congress party.

Given this fracture, it may appear that we are not one people and one nation. But it is not so. Each nationalism is so exclusive and watertight that no cross-pollination is possible ideologically. But let's not forget that each exclusive unit's denial to accommodate the other, its proclamation as the legitimate voice of the nation makes the latter more enduring. None of them recognizes any fracture or adulteration in nationalism since it is believed that the nationalism or the nation it represents is the only nationalism. The claim to be the authentic voice of the nation is so strong that one refuses to accept the other as nationalism at all.

Secular nationalism of Congress represents itself as modern, democratic and in tune with the present time, whereas cultural nationalism represented by BJP is seen as irrational and anarchist, more in tune with the feudal past, than with the democratic present. But the other in each nationalism remains unrepresented. As Neil Lazarus puts it "all nationalisms are therefore appropriative, since they all claim unisonance, and since these claims necessarily involve speaking for – and therefore silencing – others" (Lazarus 109). BJP and the Sangh Parivar<sup>19</sup> act as the cultural custodians of Indian culture against aliens like Muslims and Christians. The graffiti and posters highlighting this role decree that 'one can stay in India only when one says Vande Mataram'<sup>20</sup>, 'wherever the number of Hindus decrease the demand for secession begins', 'kill those who kill cows' etc. Similarly Congress does not canonize nationalists not belonging to Congress or Nehru family. But all said and done, it is quite interesting to note that there is not much difference between secular and cultural nationalism vis-à-vis Pakistan who is our anti-self. India's opposition to Pakistan is both ideological (India's secularism vs Pakistan's sharia) and civilizational (Indian Hindus against Pakistani Muslims) and the wars with Pakistan made the difference between secular and cultural divide in India disappear. It is very difficult to say for sure whether wars with Pakistan were ideological or civilizational. Because they were both. Only Pakistan could have made secular and cultural nationalisms in India look complementary rather than contradictory.

Obsession with Pakistan forms a binary, which is essential for the movement of history. Hindu nationalism and its almost obsessive relation with the past contrasted to secular model's near-pathological preoccupation with the history of Congress bring us to the postmodern conception of history. If postmodernism is the cultural logic of late capitalism, it brings about an end to ideology and history. Fukuyama believed that free market capitalism, by its victory over other ideologies like communism, has brought about an end to conflicts and thus to history. According to this theory, history of capitalism was in conflict with communism till the end of the cold war. Now that capitalism is omnipresent and has virtually no enemy, history and its binary thinking have come to an end. This concept of history as a battleground of two opposites was introduced by Turner's frontier thesis. Since frontier meant struggle between savagism and

civilization, Turner believed that the frontier being gone by 1890, the first phase of American history came to an end. Thus the disappearance of the other marks the end of history. Francis Fukuyama compares the entire world into a wagon train heading towards the universal happy ending, i.e. liberal capitalism. Apart from a couple of wagons, all the wagons reach the happy valley that Fukuyama calls the end of history. Disappearance of resistance to capitalism and a universal order of market economy are reasons enough for Fukuyama to declare that "the good news has come" (Fukuyama xiii). But given India's obsession with ideological and civilizational other in Pakistan, history may not end in near future.

Another way of interpreting history is to represent it as a narrative with probability and necessity. History as narrative is a sequence of events, that is antecedent upon what follows, and the effect is consequent upon what has gone before. But after the end of the cold war the cause of events vanished and we had only effects that did not need any instigation or propellant. We have this kind of effect without cause in Iraq invasion. But in India we still have many brave causes left to die for the nation. History, it seems, will continue to grow.

Still another way of conceiving history is to see it as a narrative of progress, with allied ideas like movement and linearity. History has a beginning and a definite end. Thus when growth and progress come to a saturation point, we experience the end of history. Both J.S. Mill and Adam Smith talked about a stationary state, a culmination of economic progress. This realization comes when it is seen that no further progress is possible, and when needs are invented to make the society appear vibrant. In India, globalization and progress are still in their infancy and science is still believed to be the grand narrative of growth and development. The fact that India is a developing country, with liberalized market economy just a decade old, it is impossible to announce the end of history.

It is imperative to note that, of late, India is witnessing the unfolding of history in textbooks prepared by the National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT). The saffronization and the subsequent detoxification<sup>21</sup> prove that historiography is still at large, let alone the end of history. Being a postcolonial society, we have never been free from history, first as objects and then as subjects. Even now histories continue to be written and rewritten to legitimate one ideology over another, but all in the name of the nation. The narrative of India's history, this way or that, prove that it is too early to announce the decline of the nation-state and the end of history.

The word 'history' which is derived from the Greek word 'historia' means to 'investigate'. It implies a particular manner of conceiving the past and the way in which we make it manifest. But there is always this difference between history as 'once really occurred' and history as 'now

understood'. Since both the things are expressed by the same word 'history', it implies that the events that we read in history exist autonomous of the historian's mind, purely objective and impartial. But not just imperial history which branded colonized people as people without history, but also that history which is disseminated by national governments tell one kind of story to perpetuate the importance of its characters. That is why resistant stories are never told or at most given peripheral treatment. As Bill Ashcroft says, "to have a history is the same as what it means to have a legitimate existence: history and legitimization go hand in hand, history legitimates 'us' and not others" (Ashcroft 83).

Romila Thapar acknowledges that the historian is "often influenced by his own contemporary settings" and that in writing history "the needs of the present are read into the past" (Thapar 1). Thus what we get is not history, but fiction, even though it is equally true that no history is immune to this accusation. The aim of modern Indian history is to show the freedom struggle as a secular enterprise led by Gandhi and Nehru, and that people from all religions participated in it. That is why the Hindu character of Indian freedom struggle was never legitimated. But Aurobindo believed that cultural revival is inextricably mixed with religious revival and that freedom movement should have a religious character. Dismissing the idea that nationalism is a political programme, he said:

Nationalism is a religion that has come from God...if you are going to be a nationalist, if you are going to assert to this religion of nationalism, you must do it in the religious spirit ....When it is said that India shall expand and extend itself, it is the Sanatan Dharma that shall expand and extend itself over the world .... (in Thapar 13)

Thus Aurobindo's insights into freedom struggle was ignored and only his second innings was recorded as revealing the true Aurobindo, a religious guru, not a freedom fighter. But by all means, he was lucky to have escaped the level 'terrorist' or 'fanatic', even though he is believed to be one, because at that point of time Congress party was not thinking politics in terms of governments and power. Similarly the contribution of Rammohan Roy, Ranade and other Brahmo Samaj leaders to the freedom struggle is minimized and they were represented as social reformers. But these leaders wanted a nation free from all foreign influences: "To them the nation meant the Hindu community; they regarded muslims as foreigners more or less like the British" (Hussain 136). Similarly Tilak and Arya Samajists thought of nationalism as a religious revival and tried to take Hinduism back to its pristine glory. But since all of them did not conform to Congress ideology, they were marginalized, if not demonized, by moderates like Gandhi and Nehru. Nationalism was the story of these moderates.

Congress could not sympathise with Hindu revivalism. For Congress the narrative of India

was an evolution, with its climax in 1885 when Indian National Congress was born. Going beyond 1885 would have been a tacit acceptance of those divisive forces called Hindu nationalists. Thus the history of modern India began with the emergence of Congress and India's history became the history of Congress. This reached its culmination during Indira Gandhi's tenure: 'Indira is India and India is Indira'. It meant that Indian freedom movement, or even progress, has one standardized narrative. To be a nationalist meant to be a Congress worker. Nation and Congress were synonymous; an un-Congress nationalist was no nationalist. Thus centralization of nationalism in Congress had its blatant manifestation when Mani Shankar Aiyar, UPA's former Petroleum Minister ordered to remove Veer Savarkar's<sup>22</sup> plaque from the cellular jail in Andaman. It was nothing but an attempt to erase every sign of resistance to the master narrative of Congress nationalism. To be a Congress worker is to have a legitimate position in Indian history. And the present HRD minister Arjun Singh has vowed to erase the remnant un-Congress and so antinational element from Indian history by his detoxification mission. Children will continue to read one whole chapter on Akbar, a symbol of communal harmony (because he married Hindu women, but whether he married his daughters and sisters off to Hindus is not certain), and Rana Pratap will be dismissed in a couple of sentences or paragraphs. Modern India's history, like imperial history, valorizes the victory, not resistance. And now that communists are enjoying power at the centre for the first time, the NCERT has given detailed instructions to teachers not to ignore socialists in Indian history. Immediately after taking power, the UPA banned history and social science text books prepared under NDA and ordered to refer to books which were prepared more than 30 years ago. From Saffron, history became red. Bhagat Singh, the freedom fighter, again became a terrorist.

If Congress stands for evolution, BJP and Sangh Parivar symbolise revival. Since colonialism did not recognize Indian past, decolonization for these revivalist groups means a glorification of a mythical past. As Romila Thapar says, "Glorification of the past became a compensation for the humiliation of the present" (Thapar 17). It must be admitted that these groups live in a Utopian, imaginary world to the oblivion of the present. For them the degraded present with its aliens in the form of Muslims and Christians does not reflect Indian ethos. That is why they went on to distort or saffronise Indian history by making Lord Rama and Krishna historical characters. Murli Manohar Joshi and others believed that an uncontaminated Hindu past is the expression of the nation. Since the glory of pristine Hinduism was devaluated by Islam and British rule, some ethnic and religious cleansing was required which saw its culmination in Gujarat riots. Gyan Prakash takes this revivalism to task when he says the "idea of the modern nation as the return of the archaic introduces a sharp break between the past and the present; the past irrupts, it does not evolve, into the present" (Prakash 540).

For Hindu nationalists, India lost independence with the invasion of Mamud and Ghouri, and not with the arrival of East India Company as secular history makes us believe. They somehow feel that the number of Hindu deaths were much more in the Islamic period, rather than during British Raj. Hindu nationalists did not participate in the 1857 movement, because they felt that the said movement was intended to reestablish Muslim rule under Bahadur Shah Jaffer. Independence in 1947 gave independence from Britishers, but not from Muslims. Now that India is an independent state officially, Hindu nationalists of Sangh Parivar cannot go for another independence movement. But they can certainly spread a hate campaign, and establish Hindu superiority. Nation is confused with religion.

Given these fragments, how does one justify one nation. How does one reconcile the razor sharp divide between Hindu nation and secular nation? As I have argued earlier, exclusivity has a tendency to claim universality. The claim to normal and all-inclusive umbrella refuses the other to be the same, for doing so will be the denial of its legitimacy. Both Hindu and secular nationalism claim to be the authentic and representative voice of India as a nation. Through rejection of the other, both reinscribe their faith in one nation. That means, one does not recognize the other as nation at all, thus one nation.

I will end with L.K. Advani's visit to Pakistan in June 2005 when he was the president of BJP and the speeches he made there. He made two statements: (1) Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah, Pakistan's father of the nation was a secular person and (2) the day of Babri demolition was the saddest day in his life. That he was making a contextual statement about Jinnah, who in his Constituent Assembly speech in 1947 had declared Pakistan a secular state (that secularism died a natural death after Jinnah), was forgotten. There was a storm of protest. So far as his Babri demolition<sup>23</sup> statement is concerned, secular nationalists criticised Advani for shedding crocodile tears and aiming at an image makeover to win over Indian Muslims and their votes. There was even more violent reaction from the Parivar, which observes December 6 as Valour Day, that saw in Advani's statement betrayal to 85 crore Hindus in general and kar sevaks in particular.

His observation on Jinnah was more damaging, in which both secularists and Hindu nationalists saw anti-national elements. For Congress, it was a question of survival: if Jinnah was secular, who was responsible for the partition? If Jinnah wanted both Hindus and Muslims live together, who proposed two-nation theory? Was it Nehru? Was it Gandhi? Was it Congress? To term Jinnah secular is to deprive Congress of its USP and question its status as the only champion of secularism in pre-independence India. Jinnah's secularism may change the way we look at Indian history; its heroes and villains. This may prove Congress unsecular and

- implicate it in the partition, which is seen as an evil by Indians. Both Jinnah and Congress cannot be secular. Nobody in India, after partition, subscribed to Jinnah's secularism before Advani. Given that Jinnah was dead and dead men tell no tales, Congress became synonymous with secularism. To utter Jinnah is to utter evil. As Ashis Nandy puts it, "Jinnah has become a demonic presence in the culture of Indian politics as an example of the kind of political leader one should not be" (Nandy 6). For Congress, both Jinnah and Advani are the founders of religious fanaticism in two sides of the LOC.<sup>24</sup> The validity of Advani's statement on Jinnah could have ruptured Congress' secular identity, and thus national identity.

Advani's boundary crossing was not only unacceptable to the Parivar; it was treachery out and out. Praveen Togadia, the firebrand leader of Vishwa Hindu Parishad<sup>25</sup>, called Advani 'traitor' for having betrayed the sentiments of Hindus. He even threatened to revive Jan Sangh<sup>26</sup> to represent Hindu voice. VHP spokesperson Acharya Dharmendra mockingly called BJP, Bharatiya Jinnah Party. Comparisons were made by Parivar members between a prostitute's shifting love and Advani's shifting loyalty. Coming under severe criticism Advani resigned from BJP presidency. But what is shameless is that the resolution adopted by the meeting of the BJP Parliamentary Board, after Advani withdrew the resignation, did not mention Advani's statement on Jinnah. It claimed that Advani never praised Jinnah nor did he call Jinnah secular. For these Hindu nationalists, to legitimate Jinnah is to delegitimate Hindus; to accept Jinnah's secularism is to devalidate Hindu Rashtra(Hindu State). Both Jinnah and Hindu nationalists cannot be subjects of history. In a Hindu Rashtra Jinnah can only be an antagonist sanctioning the massacre of Hindus. Making a friend of an enemy is not just possible since it may explode Parivar's identity. What is the point of being a Hindu if there is no fanatic Jinnah and blood thirsty Muslims.

One statement, many reactions. But these reactions, in spite of contradictions, proved India as a nation. Radically opposite reactions targeted Advani's antinational statement and went on to prove India, the secular nation or India, the Hindu nation. Either way India was a quasi-spiritual essence that could not be adulterated with Jinnah. Quite normally Pakistan and its founder proved India's being. In spite of fractures, secularists and Hindu nationalists reinscribed their faith in the nation by crucifying Jinnah and confirmed their faith in a uniform Pakistan (anti-secular and anti-Hindu), thus making India one.

During colonialism India as a nation emerged by pitting itself against the British and now it lives against Pakistan. Pakistan will continue to live in that image and so will India in spite of fragments. Long live our enemies, long live India.

**Notes :**

1. On the fateful day of February 27, 2002 some coaches of Sabarmati Express were torched by Muslim fundamentalists in a place called Godhra in the state of Gujarat. Those coaches were carrying the karsevaks or the activists of the makeshift Rama Temple located in the disputed site of Ayodhya. Fifty nine karsevaks were charred to death in the gruesome incident. The aftermath was worse and some two thousand muslims were killed systematically in what may be called the worst communal violence after independence.
2. Under Article 356 of Indian Constitution, the President can, on the recommendation of the Central Government, dismiss a state govt. or dissolve the state assembly in the event of a failure of the constitutional machinery in the state. Quite predictably, this Article has been invoked scores of times to settle political scores.
3. The Prevention of Terrorism Act(POTA) makes provisions for the prevention of, and for dealing with, terrorist activities. This act is also accused of being misused against muslims.
4. A region of Andhra Pradesh, once part of Nizam's Hyderabad, is economically backward compared to the coastal belt. Elections have been won and lost in the name of a separate Telengana state. Now the cause is championed by Telengana Rashtra Samiti(TRS).
5. Introduced as a temporary measure in 1947, Article 370 gives a special status and autonomy to the muslim dominated state of Jammu and Kashmir. Thus the state has a separate constitution and a separate flag.
6. United Progressive Alliance(UPA) is a coalition of many political parties led by Congress. UPA came to power in 2004.
7. National Democratic Alliance(NDA) led by Bharatiya Janata Party came to power in 1998. It is the first coalition govt. in India to have lasted a full five year term.
8. India suspended all military supply to Nepal after King Gyanendra assumed power and dismissed an elected government. But after China responded with arms supply to Nepal, India resumed the same citing national interest.
9. In May 1999 Pakistan Army intruded into Indian territory in the Kargil sector of Jammu and Kashmir. The whole operation was undertaken by the then Pakistan Army Chief and the present President Pervez Musharaf.

10. Just before seeking a fresh election in 2004 Bharatiya Janata Party advertised its achievements by making people believe that India is shining in every aspect of life. The same happened when UPA completed one year in office. In both the campaigns state machinery like TV and radio were used as political apparatuses.
11. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, one time Congress leader demanded a separate state for muslims in India to which Britishers obliged just to avoid the mess that India had been reduced to. Thus all the muslim dominated areas in the West and the East of India became parts of the new state of Pakistan.
12. Maharaja Hari Singh was the king of the state of Jammu and Kashmir at the time of partition and decided not to accede to either India or Pakistan. The king was a hindu where as the population was largely muslim. But after Pakistan invaded the territory of J& K the Maharaja decided to accede to India.
13. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh(RSS) is a nationalist right wing organization started by K.B. Hedgewar in 1925. Since then it has grown in prominence and political influence, giving rise to the Bharatiya Janata Party. The organization believes in Hindu nationalism and strives to make India a hindu state. Atal Bihari Vajpayee started his career as an RSS activist.
14. Maulana Masood Azhar was the general secretary of the Pakistan funded terrorist outfit Harkat-ul-Ansar, active in Kashmir. The outfit is fighting for the secession of Kashmir from India and making it an Islamic state. Azhar was arrested by the Indian Army in 1993. In December 1999 some terrorists of the organization hijacked Indian Airlines Flight 814 with passengers on board and demanded the release of Azhar. The government of India succumbed and Azhar was released.
15. The All Parties Hurriyat Conference(APHC) is an alliance of secessionist parties and was formed in 1993 to further the cause of Kashmir's secession from India. Since its inception it has been consistently promoted by the Pakistan Army and establishment.
16. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam(LTTE) is a separatist and terrorist organization in Sri Lanka which demands a separate state for Tamils. The organization is notorious for its cadre of suicide bombers and political assassinations.
17. Naxals are a group of people who claim to struggle on behalf of landless labourers against landlords. They operate mostly in rural areas. Their opponents say naxals are terrorists killing people in the name of making a classless society. The Communist

- Party of India(Marxist-Leninist) is the political outfit that propagates naxalite ideology.
- 18. Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. In the 1947 invasion of Kashmir, Pakistan occupied 78114 sq kms by force. Later under Sino-Pakistan pact Pakistan ceded 5180 sq kms of the occupied territory to China.
  - 19. The Sangh Parivar is a family of organizations which promote the ideology of Hindu nationalism and affiliated to the Rashtriya Swayamsavak Sangh.
  - 20. Vande Mataram, written by Bankim Chandra is the national song of India. More than the National Anthem written by Tagore, the song played a decisive role during Indian freedom struggle. Later it was appropriated by the RSS and the Sangh Parivar for the cause of Hindu nationalism. However muslims object to the song since the latter casts Mother India as an idol and also because the context in which it was sung in Bankim Chandra's Anand Math was anti-muslim. The song was also in the controversy recently when the UPA govt. decided to celebrate the song's birth centenary (wrongly though) by singing it in schools, colleges and offices, and again muslims objecting to it.
  - 21. When the BJP led NDA came to power, it rewrote the NCERT history text books from the Sangh Parivar's point of view. Communists and Congress termed it as saffronization of Indian history. When Congress came to power it purged the history books of 'anti-secular' elements which they called detoxification. Questions were raised for the anti-Hindu and anti-Sikh elements in the so-called detoxification.
  - 22. Veer Savarkar, a Hindu Mahasabha leader, was a freedom fighter and was imprisoned by the Britishers in the Andaman Cellular Jail for eleven long years.
  - 23. Babri mosque, believed to be built by one of the commanders of Babur was in an abandoned condition. Ironically the same place is believed to be the birth place of Lord Rama, which is believed to have been demolished for the mosque to come up. On December 06, 1992 activists of Sangh Parivar including BJP demolished the abandoned shrine.
  - 24. Line of Control(LOC) refers to the military control line between India and Pakistan. From being a ceasefire line it was formalised as LOC under Shimla Agreement in 1972. However neither India nor Pakistan accept it as a permanent boundary.
  - 25. Vishwa Hindu Parishad(VHP) is an international Hindu body championing the cause of Hindu nationalism. Ideologically it is affiliated to RSS.

26. Started by Shyamaprasad Mukherjee in 1951, Bharatiya Jana Sangh was ideologically close to RSS. The party was one of the partners in the Janata Party government of 1977. But after Janata Party's debacle in 1980 general election, Jana Sangh leaders left to form BJP.

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## RISING ROLES OF 'NIRDALYAS' A CASE STUDY OF THE 14<sup>th</sup> LOK SABHA GENERAL ELECTION, 2004

Arjun Sharma

All the demerits of the political parties some mentioned earlier are the contributory elements of the rise of Nirdaliyas. Truly speaking, silent features of political parties have been gradually declining to strengthen of Nirdaliyas. All the merits matter for the political parties don't matter for the independent contestants in electoral politics. Non-committed ideology, factionalism, immoral practices, weak opposition, interest groups, non-partisan politics, political and electoral behavior, voting pattern electoral mechanism, role of media both press and electronics, social taboos, economic backwardness, poverty, illiteracy, multiparty system and many more stated above are responsible factors for weakening a successful political party and strengthening non-political politics and Nirdaliyas. These all factors are visible in the case study of the 14th Lok Sabha Election in Bihar.

### An overview :

The Conceptual clarity of the term 'Nirdaliya' can't be visualized until or unless we understand the theoretical perspective of political party. It is because the 'Nirdaliya' is opposed to the term 'political party' and is also a negative term so far as affiliation is concerned. What do we mean by political parties? What are the benefits of these in modern democracy today? What are the roles they perform in electoral politics in positive as well as negative sense? What are the weakness they got that are truly responsible for the rise of Nirdaliyas?

Political parties are an indispensable feature of democracy as well as modern political system in the entire world today. Modern Party with its well- organizations and disciplinary regulations is essentially a 20th century phenomenon. One hundred about eighty years their place and functions were generally unknown. They are said to have been born in the 17th century in England. But they were in the Past distrusted, evaded and ever deplored.

Today political parties are necessary means of democracy as Barker was right in his saying. Party has ceased to be the invisible government and has become not only the visible but acknowledged government in democracy as what Finer has aptly advocated. Allan R. Ball is of the view that it is difficult to imagine modern political system without Political parties. One party system is the essential machinery of a democratic form of governance. Party less democracy might have been a feasible proposition in a small Greek City State but it is nothing less than a utopia in modern democratic set-up. that is why Lowell has pointed out that the conception of government by the whole people in any large nation is of course a chimera; for Wherever the suffrage is wide, parties are certain to exist and the control must really be in the hands of a party that Compromises a majority or a rough approximation to a majority or the people. The party less democracy of the father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi, Loknayak Jai Prakash Narayan, Acharya Vinoba Bhave and others is now far from the world of political reality. Even the newly commenced Constitutional Panchayati Raj Institutions in the

various state of India are not free from the involvement of political parties at grass root levels of power politics.

Democratic government in concrete terms means majority government and the questions of majority and minority are best settle in the presence and operation of well recognized political parties. Without political parties, there can be no unified statement of principle, no orderly evolution of policy, no regular resort to the constitutional device of parliamentary election nor of course any of the recognized institutions by means of which a party seeks of gain or maintain power.

Thus, the party system is modern growth. Apter, Blondel, Brewester, Brown, Dahl, Dean, Duverger, Grahamwallas, Hening, Lecock, Marist, Merriam, Neumann, Pinder, Polambara, Powell, Salt, Schuman, Weber, Weiner and other have narrated in detail about the necessity and vital role of the political parties in modern democratic form of a governments as well governments formed by the communistic and socialistic pattern of societies. They have a great role to play particularly in newly liberated countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America from the yoke of cononialism & imperialism.

'Why do we need political parties' is inherently attached with this question what a political party is? Edmund Burek was the first Modern statement was answered this question by defining political party as a body of man united for promoting by their joint endeavour the national interest upon some particular principle in which they are agreed. MacIver is of the opinion that a political party as an association organized in support of some principle or policy which by constitutional means it endeavour to make the determinant of government. Austin Ranny gives due importance to the politics by stating that is essentially a contest among human groups for influence over the policies of the government. Political party is a kind of political group. He further states that a political party is an autonomous organizational group that make nominations and contest elections in the hope of eventually getting and exercising control of the personnel and policies of government. Friedrich focuses on its conceptual clarity by noting that a political party is a group of human beings, stably organized with objective of securing or maintaining for its leaders the control of a government and with the further objective of giving to members of the party through such control, ideal and national benefits and advantage. Gilchrist observes by highlighting that a political party may be defined as an organized group of citizens who profess to share the same political view and who by acting as political prevail. To do so, it is necessary to control the legislature in the state. To control legislature means that party representatives must be in a majority in the legislature. Political parties, therefore, are highly organized in order to manage elections, the more members they can command the more control they have over legislature.

If we go in detail we find all the functions and role performed by the political parties

move around the ideas propagated by a group of American writers Alan R. Ball, Finer and a galaxy of thinkers mentioned earlier. One of the most important functions of political parties is that of uniting, simplifying and stabilizing the political process. They struggle for power and strive to form order out of chaos. They provide a link between the government and the people. They seek to educate, instruct and activate the electorate. Of course, political educations to the masses are provided by the cadres of the parties. The incessant propaganda and activities carried on by the political parties in favour of their candidates and policies against the candidates and programmers of the opposition proves highly informative to an average voter. Bryce has beautifully said that the political parties keep a nation's mind alive as the rise and fall of the sweeping tide freshens the water of long ocean inlets.

While increasing the scope of political activity and widening popular participation, they perform input function of recruiting political leaders. They set value goals for the society. They present, define and classify the issue for the electorate. They do have ideological and philosophical bases, no matter how blurred and no matter how divorced from the actual political behavior of the party they are. They do the job of political modernization particularly in the newly liberated countries of Third World. They perform social welfare functions. They are not only essential as the conductor of government in parliamentary democracy but also as the critic of government. Role of opposition performed by one or more political parties is to check and balance the power of government. Even in presidential form of democracy, they serve as coordinating factors between the organs of the governments. Social, cultural, religious educational, economic, historical and ideological factors are important denominators of the party.

What are the reason for these failures of these qualitative political parties in a society like Bihar? They have to be focused here, though details of the rise of Nirdaliyas would be chalked out a little later. Complexities in our multi-lingual, multicultural and multi-religious society like ours are responsible too. Inter-personal sour relationship, asocial rituals, destructive elements, anti-social lumpens, poisonous communal feelings, caste-consideration, Kinship relations, religious fanaticism, immoral acts, value-free educational system, height of poverty, rising unemployment, bone breaking price-hike, deserted economy, burning indebted farmers, down-trodden agricultural laborers, half-ed industrial workers, growing kidnapping industries, corrupt administration, politicization of criminals, heinous politics, greedy power-elites, caste-class based militant sena ( Ranveer Sena Lorik Sena, Brahamish Sena, Sri Krishna Sena, Lal Sena and many more) path-finder Naxalites, peace-seeker Maoists, false-fighter terrorists etc have added fuel to the frustrated youth and masses. It won't be wrong in assessing in this concern that almost all political parties have failed in nurturing and cultivating them.

Affected social life, artificial character, vested interests, minority discontent, regional disparity, curtailments of individual freedom factional politics, pressure-group, party interest,

weak opposition, party amenity, multi-party (more than 7 national and 30 regional) etc. are responsible factors for the failure of political that further contributed to the of Nirdaliyas.

#### Rise of Nirdaliyas :

All the demerits of the political parties some mentioned earlier are the contributory elements of the rise of Nirdaliyas. Truly speaking, silent features of political parties have been gradually declining to strengthen of Nirdaliyas. All the merits matter for the political parties don't matter for the independent contestants in electoral politics. Non-committed ideology, factionalism, immoral practices, weak opposition, interest groups, non-partisan politics, political and electoral behavior, voting pattern electoral mechanism, role of media both press and electronics, social taboos, economic backwardness, poverty, illiteracy, multiparty system and many more stated above are responsible factors for weakening a successful political party and strengthening non-political politics and Nirdaliyas. These all factors are visible in the case study of the 14th Lok Sabha Election in Bihar.

Ideology attempts to be a description of political reality and blue print of action. It is a means of legitimizing the government and the policies of the government. It is system of action related value. In broad, ideology is defined as a self-contained and self-justifying-belief system based on a definite worldview. It claims to provide a basis for explaining the whole of reality. It proceeds with certain assumption about the nature of man and builds on their basis a theory of human history, a moral code of conduct, a sense of mission and a programme for action. Of course, ideologies claim to embody the whole truth and adherence to a particular ideological system is considered to be both a rational and moral act. Those who subscribe to a particular ideology take it to be their duty to propagate it and achieve total conformity to it.

It is because of this ideological commitment political parties are bound with and failed in getting other things that bind the interests of the people. Ideological framework of the party is an important factor in how the party sees its relationship with the rest of the political system and hence it has an important bearing on the structure of the political party. Ideologies of a particular party are reflected in the manifesto through which promises of the party are made for the future course of action in the interests of masses or for some communities or sections of the society. Now it is a 'rasmadaygi' (formality or ritual performance) only. It has become a bundle of lies and useless document. Even party activists do not bother for this 'promise-dairy'. That is why once our ex-Dy. Prime Minister Devi Lal responded to the media by saying, "Arey Bhai, Manifesto to likhne-wala bhi na padhte" (O my brother, even the writer of the manifesto does not go through it). It is blamed to be a means of befooling and cheating the masses. It is a kind of bundle that the promise-breaker politicians used to bear with them.

The party interest supersede all. Almost all political parties have, practically speaking,

become principleless. For example BJP has not been committed to its original stand for 'Hindutva', Uniform Civil Code of conduct and Art. 370 related to the state of Jammu & Kashmir. They keep moving sometimes forward and sometimes backward. This party compromised to grab the power at the centre as well as the state levels. The end, the destination, was also distorted ideologically from 'Hindu Rashtra' to 'Gandhian Socialism' to Monastic Humanism' to 'Cultural Nationalism'. In our multi-party democratic system, no party can claim whether Rightist or Leftist or Centralists to remain committed to the things for that they are formed and existed.

Factionalism has been very important factor contributing to the rise of Nirdaliyas. Congress Party was broken into many times after 1967. We have witnessed in 1967, 1969, 1980, 1990 at the centre and other occasions in the state of Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. We have the history of the left Bifurcation in 1964, 1974 and in 1980s in Bihar. Janata Party of Lok Nayak Jai Prakash Narayan in 1977 became not less than a big banyan tree that had many roots rooted in the ground but later uprooted by their ideological crises though it was a clash of personality – cult. From time to time all these personalities of social justice and champions formed their own party by breaking the main one. Some of them are known as Janta Party (s), Bhartiya Janata Party, Samjwadi Janta Party, Lok Dal, Lok Dal (T), Lok Dal (C) Dalit Mazdoor Kisan Party, Samajwadi Party, Bahujan Smaj Party, Rashtriya Lok Dal, Indian National Lok Dal, Janata Dal (S), Biju Janta Dal, Rashtriya Janata Dal, Samata Party, Lok Janshakti party and more. There are many hostile camps within a political party. 'Molbhav' or 'Kharid-frost' (bargaining in cash or kind) has become very popular phenomenon these days in the struggle for power. During the crisis hour of the formation of Coalition government, leaders come out openly without the fear of the people and of the media. Jharkhand and Bihar have faced this situation. Sometimes the whole ministry (example, Bhajandal government in Haryana) changed its colour to the colour of the party it sides.

Caste, kinship, religion, dynastic domination etc. play key role in power game. Sometimes Party also fills fake candidates to defeat the competitors. 'Votekatwa' (few votes grabbers) candidates play important role in getting their caste or party or kinship candidates elected or defeated. After election Nirdaliyas join the party which provides the post of their choice.

Tow or more political parties make alliance not only to win but also to defeat the enemy party or alliance. After the electoral defeat, they join hands together to reach the magic number to form the Government. Now this coalition culture is responsible for the rise of Nirdaliyas because they are more benefited and successful in grabbing power in their own hands. We have witnessed peculiar combination of congress with other parties in Bihar, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Kashmir.

Opposition parties play key role in a democracy by controlling, checking and balancing

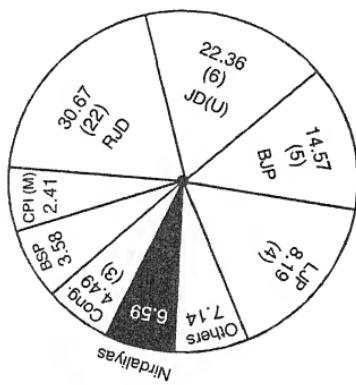
the parties in power. But these they don't pay attention to the basic problems and causes of the people. Kinship, Self-interest, Criminalization, Scandals, Kidnapping, Bahubali (Power elites) etc. are the hurdles on the way of democratization and efficiency. Oppositions are only for the sake of opposition. Democracy is a government in which every one has a share, but practically it doesn't happen, poverty, illiteracy, booth-capturing, threat of life, bogus voting etc. are the snakes to bite the innocent voters. Majority has become the means of minority suppression. Very few candidates win the election with a simple majority of more than 50 percent that we will see later in this area of analysis. It is because of this coalition concept, after formation of the government it becomes mandatory to prove a simple majority on the floor of the house. Sometimes party's stand and logic go against the wishes of the dominant personalities within the party and also against the public opinion. Handling of Ayoudhya issue, operation of Golden temple and tackling of terrorism went against the interests of congress party. BJP was also blamed in the case of demolition of Babri Masjid (mosque). Artificial and unreal arguments don't work in reality in the long run.

Individual respects and wishes do suffer in a democracy when leader impose their dictatorial attitude in handling the general issue. Congress, BJP and other regional parties like RJD, Trinamul Congress, BJD etc. were in the limelight recently. Nehru-Indra dynasty rule the national party like Congress through out. People still remember how the party president from outside Nehru family Sitaram Kesari was thrown out. Party structure is pyramidal and follows the decision by scalar-process from down to up and from up to down. Left and centralist party take decision at central level instead of taking at the level below. This hierarchical process takes too much time and hampers the speedy work concerning the masses. Political party without legal responsibility makes a mockery in the governance. This system has created dual government. In one party system, a decision is a decision of both the party and the government. Boss at the top has to carry the executive governmental decision. That is why Steffen asserts that the party system is an organization of social treason and the boss in the chief traitor. Partyless democracy is working at the local level. Some of the states like Bihar does not dare to conduct elections to the Panchayati Raj Institution on party line. It can work in small nations like Nepal but can not work here successfully. We are not living in the era of the Greek City State today. Charismatic leadership sometimes plays vital role in a party. Gandhi, J.P., Lohia, Nehru, Indira and Vajpayee were popular in the parties they belonged. Today at regional level some names like Lalu, Nitish, Rambilas, Mamta, Jayalalita and Mayavati are focused. Failure of Socio-economic development, organizational structure, lack of discipline, hijacked press, prevailing of multi-party system (more than 657 registered but unrecognized) etc. are also contributory factors led to the rise of Nirdaliyas.

#### **Scenario of the 14th Lok Sabha General Election, 2004 :**

Result of the 14th Lok Sabha General Election, 2004 in Bihar went in the favour of

Rastriya Janata Dal (RJD). It won 22 seats out of total 40 in Bihar with 30.6 percent of votes polled. Other UPA (United Progressive Alliance) partners Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) and Congress (INC- Indira) won 4 (8.19%) seats respectively. NDA (National Democratic Alliance) share 11 seats only (against the UPA of 29) divided into JD (U) (Janta Dal- United) and BJP (Bhartiya Janta Party) as 6 (22.36%) and 5 (14.57%) respectively. No any other political party as well Nirdaliyas won a single seat from Bihar. But Nirdaliya's performance was really surprising that we will see a little later. FIGURE-1 shows Party-wise performance of recognized parties in details-



Source : Election Commission of India, Patna

By Sa' aadat Hasan Mintoo

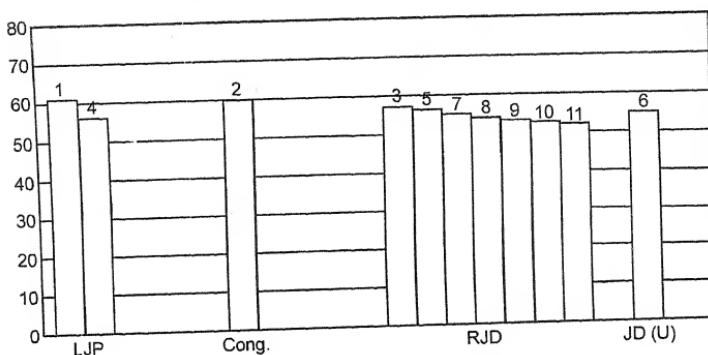
Asst. Chief Election Officer-cum- A. Secretary, Patna

The result of the 14th Lok Sabha has Witnessed the rising number of non-political participants. For instance, Patna Constituency (the biggest amongst all 40) in Bihar now (54 with Jharkhand), 12 contestants (more than 50%) out of total 23 were independent. They all secured 17733 votes (around 2%) out of total valid votes polled 901616 (54.78%) against total electors 1741220. Even Samajwadi Party of Mulayam Singh and Rastriya Lok Dal of Ajit Singh remained trailing behind (writer's earlier published Micro- study in Anupam Uphaar, Patna, Vol-II, No. 16, Sept. 2004)

In this election, very few MPs have secured more than 50% votes polled. The total number is 11 only. The FIGURE-2 illustrates their nos. of parties with percentage of votes secured individually in their respective constituencies –

Figure-2

M.P. Secured More than 50% Votes Polled



1. Ram Vilas Paswan, Hajipur (61.72%)
2. Meera Kumar, Sasaram (59.76)
3. Ali Ahmad Fatmi, Darbhanga (56.08)
4. Ram Chandra Paswan, Rosera (55.23)
5. Jai Prakash Narayan, Munger (54.38)
6. Nitish Kumar, Nalanda (52.65)
7. Rajesh Kr. Manjhi, Gaya (52.62)
8. Taslimuddin, Kishanganj, (51.68)
9. Akhilesh Pd. Singh, Motihari (51.33)
10. Lalu Prasad, Chapra (51.31)
11. Alok Kr. Mehta, Samastipur (50.94)

SOURCE: ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA, PATNA

If we have a cursory look upon General Election Scenario of all 40 constituencies in Bihar, then we could gather all important information regarding this psephological analysis. Total votes, valid votes, polled votes in percentage and the number of total contestants both party and independent-wise figure in the Table given below –

**Table-1**  
**Election Scenario of the 14th Lok Sabha, 2004 in Bihar**

| S.N. | Constituency | Total<br>Votes | Valid<br>Votes | % Polled | No. of<br>contestants | No. of<br>P.P. | No. of<br>I.C.** |
|------|--------------|----------------|----------------|----------|-----------------------|----------------|------------------|
| 1.   | Ara          | 1359515        | 787399         | 57.92    | 11                    | 8              | 3                |
| 2.   | Araria       | 1184959        | 646144         | 54.53    | 13                    | 8              | 5                |
| 3.   | Aurangabad   | 1401973        | 767238         | 54.73    | 13                    | 7              | 6                |
| 4.   | Bagaha       | 1160275        | 570882         | 49.02    | 11                    | 9              | 2                |
| 5.   | Balia        | 1181425        | 632343         | 53.52    | 11                    | 3              | 3                |
| 6.   | Banka        | 1213691        | 713888         | 58.82    | 11                    | 5              | 6                |
| 7.   | Barh         | 1242851        | 864102         | 69.53    | 8                     | 6              | 2                |
| 8.   | Baxar        | 1222441        | 649158         | 53.01    | 11                    | 7              | 4                |
| 9.   | Begusarai    | 1278758        | 678667         | 53.07    | 9                     | 6              | 3                |
| 10.  | Bettiah      | 1278163        | 569909         | 44.56    | 14                    | 7              | 7                |
| 11.  | Bhagalpur    | 1388037        | 757287         | 54.56    | 10                    | 6              | 4                |
| 12.  | Bikramganj   | 1298224        | 733986         | 56.54    | 16                    | 8              | 8                |
| 13.  | Chapra       | 1164917        | 446101         | 38.03    | 9                     | 5              | 4                |
| 14.  | Darbhanga    | 1202100        | 762657         | 63.44    | 9                     | 5              | 4                |
| 15.  | Gaya         | 1436323        | 883403         | 61.05    | 12                    | 8              | 4                |
| 16.  | Gopalganj    | 1231178        | 694492         | 56.41    | 10                    | 7              | 3                |
| 17.  | Hajipur      | 1208834        | 773597         | 64.00    | 8                     | 7              | 1                |
| 18.  | Jahanabad    | 1246756        | 863843         | 69.29    | 14                    | 7              | 7                |
| 19.  | Jhanjharpur  | 1163817        | 704243         | 60.50    | 9                     | 6              | 3                |

|     |             |         |         |       |     |     |     |
|-----|-------------|---------|---------|-------|-----|-----|-----|
| 20. | Katihar     | 1158044 | 704449  | 60.83 | 14  | 6   | 8   |
| 21. | Khagariya   | 1197045 | 676017  | 56.47 | 9   | 6   | 3   |
| 22. | Kishanganj  | 1278476 | 813315  | 63.62 | 10  | 4   | 6   |
| 23. | Madehepura  | 1187490 | 695674  | 58.58 | 12  | 6   | 6   |
| 24. | Madhubani   | 1257633 | 695146  | 55.27 | 10  | 7   | 3   |
| 25. | Maharajganj | 1114665 | 664434  | 59.61 | 11  | 4   | 7   |
| 26. | Motihari    | 1221716 | 675844  | 55.58 | 10  | 4   | 6   |
| 27. | Mujaffarpur | 1237345 | 784096  | 63.37 | 14  | 7   | 7   |
| 28. | Munger      | 1310042 | 882978  | 64.12 | 9   | 7   | 2   |
| 29. | Nalanda     | 1311901 | 762657  | 68.23 | 13  | 7   | 6   |
| 30. | Nawada      | 1505544 | 1010037 | 67.09 | 14  | 6   | 8   |
| 31. | Paina       | 1741220 | 901616  | 54.78 | 23  | 11  | 12  |
| 32. | Purnea      | 1179491 | 709015  | 60.11 | 15  | 9   | 6   |
| 33. | Rosera      | 1245392 | 713798  | 57.32 | 9   | 6   | 3   |
| 34. | Saharsa     | 1286709 | 738280  | 57.38 | 10  | 7   | 3   |
| 35. | Samastipur  | 1433793 | 767238  | 60.22 | 13  | 6   | 7   |
| 36. | Sasaram     | 1291800 | 697268  | 53.98 | 11  | 7   | 4   |
| 37. | Sheohar     | 1214428 | 666398  | 54.87 | 9   | 5   | 4   |
| 38. | Sitamarhi   | 1265132 | 690851  | 54.61 | 13  | 5   | 8   |
| 39. | Siwan       | 1054441 | 637549  | 60.46 | 8   | 5   | 3   |
| 40. | Vaishali    | 1197345 | 748759  | 62.53 | 16  | 6   | 10  |
|     |             |         |         |       | 460 | 259 | 201 |

\*PP = Political Parties

\*\*I.C.= Independent Contestant (Total Nirdaliyas Shares 43.7% of votes)

SOURCE: ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA, PATNA

There were 460 contestants altogether divided into two segments of political parties and independent as 259 and 201 respectively. The percentage of Nirdalaya candidates contested this 14th Lok Sabha General Election, 2004 in Bihar is around 43.7.

When we cast our focus on the percentage of votes secured by each constituency we trace that in the dependent contestants of Vaishali stood 1st by scoring 38.94% of votes followed by the two other segments of Buxar 2nd (25.10%) and Gopalganj 3rd (21.25%). Details are computed in the Table-2

Table-2

## Constituency-wise Votes Secured by the Independent Contestants

| S.N. | Constituencies | % of Votes Secured* |
|------|----------------|---------------------|
| 1    | Vaishali       | 38.94               |
| 2.   | Buxar          | 25.10               |
| 3.   | Gopalganj      | 21.25               |
| 4.   | Ara            | 20.00               |
| 5.   | Maharajganj    | 18.32               |
| 6.   | Purnea         | 17.04               |
| 7.   | Bettiah        | 12.81               |
| 8.   | Begusarai      | 11.40               |
| 9.   | Samastipur     | 10.02               |
| 10.  | Katihar        | 06.37               |
| 11.  | Balia          | 06.18               |
| 12.  | Nawada         | 06.10               |
| 13.  | Araria         | 05.65               |
| 14.  | Chapra         | 05.59               |
| 15.  | Kishanganj     | 04.99               |
| 16.  | Madhepura      | 04.91               |
| 17.  | Bikramganj     | 04.47               |
| 18.  | Saharsa        | 04.29               |
| 19.  | Sitamarhi      | 03.93               |
| 20.  | Bhagalpur      | 03.82               |
| 21.  | Rosera         | 03.48               |
| 22.  | Dharbhanga     | 03.44               |

|     |             |       |
|-----|-------------|-------|
| 23. | Khagaria    | 03.00 |
| 24. | Bagaha      | 02.98 |
| 25. | Jhanjharpur | 02.78 |
| 26. | Mujaffarpur | 02.65 |
| 27. | Siwan       | 02.63 |
| 28. | Banka       | 2.53  |
| 29. | Sheohar     | 2.41  |
| 30. | Aurangabad  | 02.33 |
| 31. | Patna       | 01.97 |
| 32. | Motihari    | 01.76 |
| 33. | Madhubani   | 01.66 |
| 34. | Barh        | 01.48 |
| 35. | Nalanda     | 01.35 |
| 36. | Sasaram     | 01.16 |
| 37. | Hajipur     | 01.08 |
| 38. | Jahanabad   | 01.03 |
| 39. | Gaya        | 00.95 |
| 40. | Munger      | 00.94 |

\* Totalled by the writer

#### SOURCE: ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA, PATNA

The study of Table-2 shows that the percentage of votes secured by the different constituencies varies from top 38.94 (Vaishali) to bottom 0.94 (Munger) Constituency-wise picture is clearly visible in it.

This study indicates that the 31 independent contestants out of 201 total secured better position and their percentages vary from 34.13 of Vaishali (Vijay Kr. Shukla) to 0.48 of Banka (Faniala Shah). Tablature below describes the details-

**Table-3**  
**Votes and Rank Secured by the Independent Contestants**

| S.N. | Independent Contestants | Constituencies | Valid Votes Polled | Votes Secured | %     | Rank*           |
|------|-------------------------|----------------|--------------------|---------------|-------|-----------------|
| 1.   | Vijay Kr. Shukla        | Vaishali       | 748759             | 255568        | 34.13 | 2 <sup>nd</sup> |
| 2.   | Dadan Singh             | Baxar          | 649158             | 151114        | 23.28 | 2 <sup>nd</sup> |
| 3.   | Kali Pd. Pandey         | Gopalganj      | 694492             | 136424        | 19.64 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> |
| 4.   | Brahmeshwar N. Singh    | Ara            | 787399             | 148973        | 15.02 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> |
| 5.   | Dr. Mahachandra Prasad  | Maharajganj    | 664434             | 90807         | 15.02 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> |
| 6.   | Km. Suman Singh         | Begusarai      | 678667             | 61352         | 09.04 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> |
| 7.   | Jeevachh Paswan         | Purnea         | 709015             | 57021         | 08.04 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> |
| 8.   | Sheel Kr. Roy           | Samastipur     | 767238             | 54807         | 07.00 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> |
| 9.   | Banwari Ram             | Nawada         | 1010037            | 52384         | 05.19 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> |
| 10.  | Suresh Kr. Azad         | Saharsa        | 738280             | 15415         | 02.09 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> |
| 11.  | Safi Ahamad             | Dharbhanga     | 762657             | 13546         | 01.78 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> |
| 12.  | Rajan Tiwari            | Bettiah        | 569909             | 32759         | 05.75 | 4 <sup>th</sup> |
| 13.  | Brajesh Kumar           | Chapra         | 466101             | 10753         | 02.41 | 4 <sup>th</sup> |
| 14.  | Lal Chand Ram           | Rosera         | 713798             | 16820         | 02.36 | 4 <sup>th</sup> |
| 15.  | Sato Mandal             | Madhepura      | 695674             | 16673         | 01.68 | 4 <sup>th</sup> |
| 16.  | Rajendra Mahto          | Begusarai      | 678667             | 10276         | 01.51 | 4 <sup>th</sup> |
| 17.  | Tithin Yadav            | Banka          | 713888             | 8929          | 01.25 | 4 <sup>th</sup> |
| 18.  | Sanjay Kumar            | Jhanjharpur    | 704243             | 8194          | 01.16 | 4 <sup>th</sup> |
| 19.  | Shyam Kr. Paswan        | Muzaffarpur    | 784096             | 7684          | 00.98 | 4 <sup>th</sup> |
| 20.  | S.N. Writer             | Araria         | 646144             | 11837         | 01.83 | 5 <sup>th</sup> |
| 21.  | Girija Prasad Singh     | Bikaganj       | 733986             | 12438         | 01.69 | 5 <sup>th</sup> |
| 22.  | Sunil Chaudhary         | Bhagalpur      | 757287             | 12202         | 01.61 | 5 <sup>th</sup> |
| 23.  | S.S. Thakur             | Kishanganj     | 813315             | 12261         | 01.51 | 5 <sup>th</sup> |
| 24.  | S.N. Roy                | Samastipur     | 767238             | 10391         | 01.33 | 5 <sup>th</sup> |
| 25.  | Devendra Mukhiya        | Saharsa        | 738280             | 8964          | 01.21 | 5 <sup>th</sup> |
| 26.  | Lalan Ram               | Hajipur        | 773597             | 8322          | 01.08 | 5 <sup>th</sup> |
| 27.  | S.C. Ram                | Vaishali       | 748759             | 7930          | 01.06 | 5 <sup>th</sup> |
| 28.  | S.K. Singh              | Barh           | 864102             | 7983          | 00.92 | 5 <sup>th</sup> |
| 29.  | R.S. Shah               | Sheohar        | 666398             | 5343          | 00.08 | 5 <sup>th</sup> |
| 30.  | S.P. Jaiwal             | Motihaari      | 675844             | 5671          | 00.48 | 5 <sup>th</sup> |
| 31.  | Fanjal Shah             | Banka          | 713888             | 3447          | 00.48 | 5 <sup>th</sup> |

Total: 2nd = Two

3rd = Nine

4th = Eight

\*5th = Twelve

SOURCE : ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA, PATNA

It constitutes the rank the highest 2nd to the lowest 5th. All those names of Independent contestants who failed in securing less percentage than mentioned above have not been counted here. They study also reveals the fact that 2 contestants got 2nd, 9 received the status of 3rd, 8 stood 4th and 12 place the 5th ran. It provides the names of contestants with the constituencies from where they contested. It also made an attempt to highlight the valid votes polled and votes secured by them individually.

An empirical study of 'Nirdaliyas involvement in central power-politics cleary specifies that Independent Contestants are 78 against that the total strength of political parties 57 in 10 constituencies in Bihar. They out-number political parties by 21 more. The details are incorporated in the table-4 esteemed below-

**Table-4**  
**More Independents than Political Parties Contestants**

| S.N. | Constituencies | I.C.* | P.P.** | More than P.P |
|------|----------------|-------|--------|---------------|
| 1    | Patna          | 12    | 11     | 1             |
| 2    | Vaishali       | 10    | 6      | 4             |
| 3.   | Katihar        | 8     | 6      | 2             |
| 4.   | Nawada         | 8     | 6      | 2             |
| 5.   | Sitamarhi      | 8     | 5      | 3             |
| 6.   | Maharajganj    | 7     | 4      | 3             |
| 7.   | Samastipur     | 7     | 6      | 1             |
| 8.   | Motihari       | 6     | 4      | 2             |
| 9.   | Kishanganj     | 6     | 4      | 2             |
| 10.  | Banka          | 6     | 5      | 1             |
|      | Total          | 78    | 57     | 21            |

\* I.C. = Independent Contestants

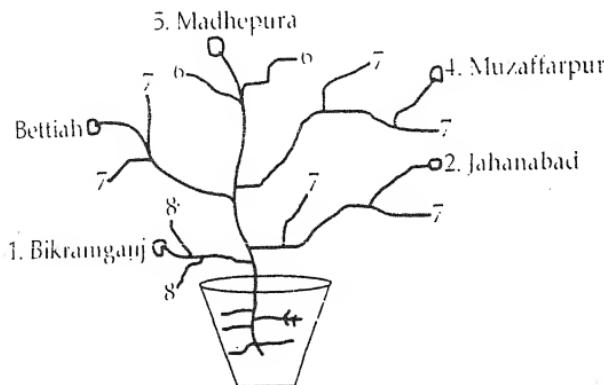
\*\* P.P. = Political Parties

SOURCE: ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA, PATNA

The investigation of 10 such constituencies results that this segment of Parliamentary constituencies of Bihar covers 25% area of analysis. It reflects that the masses are more conscious and don't have firm faith in degrading Political Parties existing today. They seem to be aware of their Political rights and fundamental duties.

The study also reveals this fact the Nirdaliyas of 5 constituencies are equally to those that of Political Parties. It covers 12.5% constituencies of Bihar. If added to the earlier one, it becomes a total of 38 percent. Figure-3 made below reckons these facts

Figure-3



SOURCE : ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA, PATNA

No Constituency in Bihar goes without the representation of Independent contestants. Though, Hajipur is the only constituency where a single Independent contestant contested the single seat against seven candidates of political parties were in the fray.

#### Concluding Observations :

All the facts in the form of Tables and figures narrated provide some observations to be concluded here. All the factors responsible for the rise of Nirdaliyas are interrelated. We must heed each and every aspect that degrading political ideology, process and parties. The level of socio-economic and educational development influences the nature of the party competition. Caste and religious differences should be chalked out in the interest of party and the nation not in the individuals. Marxism and communism should be applied in the Indian context of

agrarian society. We know that Marxism is a mixed non-vegetarian of Hegelistic dialect, British capitalist economy and French socialism. Ideals of our constitution and the dreams of the Fathers of the Nation and fore fathers should not be shattered by the leaders interested in their own all round development and in vested interests. Rightists, Leftist and Centralists must understand the societal context of highly multireligious and culturally very rich societies like ours. All have to struggle against illiteracy, poverty unemployment and the very poor infrastructural management that hampers our political development, modernization and change. Rig Vedic culture and world wide appreciated civilization must be fused in our political walk of life philosophical formation and moral standards must be substantiated while compiling our manifestoes. They should be sincerely and honestly implemented and the impression of a bundle of lies should be disinclined. Parties are creation of modern political processes and their emergence presupposes a necessary degree of urbanization, democratization and development of mass communication.

Political and electoral behavior, voting pattern, polling arrangements, role of election commission for free and fair elections, laws and rules for uprooting corruption and scandals, legitimacy of manifestoes, Party-structures, discouragement of partyless democracy, political discipline, responsible and conscious citizens, campaigning methods, role of media both print and electronic, strong opposition, oligarchic leadership, dynastic domination, pyramidal structure of the party, growing multi-party system, voting techniques, voting materials, individual thinking, coalition culture, ticket distribution irrespective of caste, kingship, sex and religion, dedicated cadres, equal treatment and respect, party members democratization, standing above self and ego, removing poverty and unemployment to crush terrorism, regional development, land reforms to nab naxalism, good governance, law and order and many more headings may be mentioned here to stop the rising of Nirdailyas and degradation and decay of political parties.

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## THE POLITICS OF TRIBAL RESISTANCE IN ORISSA

Sarbeswar Sahoo

*Explaining the politics of resistance in Orissa, the paper makes three arguments. Firstly, the fear of the uncertain future, and the cultural meaning attached to the geographical notions of 'place' provide important perspectives in understanding the relations of power, domination and the politics of collective resistance. Secondly, the threat of material interest serves as an organizing principle in politicizing identity and interest groups against the outside authority. And finally, the magnitude of resistance intensifies when the grievances of the people are treated in an unresponsive and oppressive manner. In an industrialized India the destruction of the aboriginal's life is as inevitable as the submergence of the Egyptian temples caused by the dams of the Nile....As things are going there can be no grandeur in the primitive's end. It will not be even simple extinction, which is not the worst of human destinies. It is to be feared that the aboriginal's last act will be squalid, instead of being tragic. What will be seen with most regret will be, not his disappearance, but his enslavement and degradation.*

NIRAD C. CHAUDHURI, *The Continent of Circé, 1965*<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

Contemporary Indian society is pockmarked with issues of conflict and competing struggles of classes and communities and caught in a 'double contradiction'<sup>2</sup> (Singh 2001) of modernity and development on the one hand and displacement, marginalization and collective resistance on the other. Collective resistance by different groups and communities<sup>3</sup> in defense of community, livelihood and identity is a response to the hegemonic and homogenizing project of modernity and capitalist development which perceives nature as "external" to society and encourages the belief that nature is an infinitely exploitable domain.<sup>4</sup>

Based on the above background, the paper seeks to highlight some of the central issues related to the dynamics of development and its repercussions for tribal peoples in the state of Orissa. The central questions it examines are why does collective resistance occur where they do and how are the actions and options of social movement agents shaped by and also impact on social structures? What inspires and empowers people to resist and to reveal the character and spirit of the cultural expressions of resistance? Addressing these questions, the paper makes three basic arguments. Firstly, peoples' resistance in Kashipur block<sup>5</sup> of Orissa is driven by fear of the uncertain future and the expected repercussions of the state planned industrialization process and intrusion of various transnational corporations which evict people from their traditional sources of livelihood and sustenance such as the land and forest. It also argues that the geographical notions of 'place' – where social structure and social relations intersect, and the cultural meaning attached to it by the people provide important perspectives to understand the relations of power, domination and the politics of collective resistance. Secondly, resistance occurs when the material interests of the people are at risk<sup>6</sup>. This serves to stimulate organizing the affected people into politicized interest group associations to fight collectively against the economic and political deprivation caused by the

outside authority. And finally, the magnitude of resistance intensifies when the grievances of the people are treated in an unresponsive and oppressive manner. In this context, hitherto existing relations of the agencies of the state with the people (civil society) provide an important insight into the nature of collective resistance. Based on these arguments the paper has been divided into three sections besides a brief introduction and some tentative conclusions.

### Development, Displacement and Resistance<sup>7</sup>

Located on India's east coast, Orissa despite its generous endowment of mineral wealth, forests, lakes, rivers, a long coastline, and a rich and ancient history with vast untapped potential for both cultural and eco-tourism, has been suffering from 'extreme poverty'<sup>8</sup>. Due to the 'central neglect', 'unequal allocation of resources' in economic sphere and 'administrative apathy', the state has been denied of a 'fair deal' in provincial autonomy and central subsidies right from the colonial period. This consequently colored the Oriyas' self-image as backward and marginal group in India's polity, democracy and the discourse of development (Sengupta 2001:179-181).

In this context, economic liberalization gives the historically neglected Oriyas for the first time an opportunity to look beyond the state and, in a sense, globalize the question of their development. In his eagerness to bring development to Orissa the then chief minister, Biju Patnaik openly invited investment from the country and overseas to set up various plants, and refineries (Sengupta 2001:184) to modernize the state. Surveys indicate that Baphili Mali plateau<sup>9</sup> occurring in the border areas of Rayagada and Kalahandi districts of Orissa has about 196 million tones of bauxite (Das 2001) which attracted many multinational companies to set up their plants for the extraction of bauxite. Along with this heavy reserve of bauxite in the area, the establishment of plants goes back to the mid 1980s when Kashipur faced a terrible draught. Starvation deaths reported in the national media led the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to visit Kashipur and to formulate some plans for the development of the tribal population of the region. Various agreements were signed with diverse multinational companies as a part of tribal development project which led company after company to queue in to the area.

Thus, the choices of these locations for industrialization are two fold. The most important one is, as put by the Chief Minister of Orissa in an interview with *The Business Today* (2004), its massive iron and bauxite reserves which need to be exploited. Estimates support that 70 percent of India's bauxite reserves are located here (Menon 2005). And the second one is related to what Verrier Elwin called 'the controversy of isolation, assimilation or integration'. The proponents of the industrialization projects argue that, for their own good, the 'backward and savage tribals need to be assimilated into the modern mainstream. Under the present circumstances, tribals are condemned to a life of impoverishment and exploitation; their progress lies in becoming a part of the 'modern', 'developed' along the common trajectory towards industrialization and urbanization (Baviskar 1997: 106). But, how true the assertion that

'assimilation' is beneficial for tribal progress is a matter of disputation.

The Utkal Alumina International (UAIL), a consortium of Norsk Hydro (45 percent shares) of Norway, ALCAN (35 percent shares) of Canada and INDAL (20 percent shares) of India have been trying to start work in the Kashipur block of Rayagada district for the past few years. But they have been facing collective resistance by the tribals of the area. The questions why do the tribals resist the development projects and why do conflicts arise? Paul Routledge (1999: 76) explains that

*"Capital-intensive schemes have displaced traditional and subsistence economies which are labor-intensive and Western values (of capitalist production, economic growth) have been emphasized at the expense of indigenous and traditional system of knowledge, economy and culture.... In the process, traditional subsistence economies and their associated cultures are destroyed; people face displacement from their homes and lands, lose access to their resources, and become economically marginalized."*

Statistical figures indicate that in Orissa till 2000, about 20 lakh people have been directly affected by development projects in varying degrees out of which about 5 lakh have been physically displaced losing their home and hearth from their original habitat. Statistical figures further indicate that while dam/irrigation projects alone have displaced nearly 3.5 lakh people which is roughly 70% of the total displaced persons, industrial projects have displaced about 60,000 people which is 12% of the total displaced whereas the mining projects, urban development projects, thermal projects and wild life sanctuaries have displaced 3.37%, 12.86%, 2.60% and 0.5% of the total displaced people in the state of Orissa. Although the above referred figures account for the already completed projects, there are a host of other projects which are either ongoing or are in the pipeline in which about 2 lakh more people are expected to be displaced.

According to an estimate, in the case of Utkal Alumina 1,750 hectares of land will be required for mining, the plant site, a township, and dumping spots where more than 2100 families in two dozen villages stand to lose their land, including 370 families who would lose all their lands. Estimates of the people negatively affected by the Utkal project range from 750 (Hydro's estimate), to 3500 (Utkal's estimate) to 60,000 (Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation estimate). According to a news report, mining in Orissa has created 50,000 environmental refugees and on the whole 1.4 million people mostly tribals have been displaced by developmental projects in Orissa alone (Ota 2001).

In addition to this high magnitude of displacement, the rehabilitation history of Orissa and India also stimulates to resistance process. According to an estimate, out of the total displaced people more than 74 percent are still waiting for rehabilitation (see Table: 1 below). And in Orissa, in the Indravati dam project<sup>10</sup> nearly 5000 families were displaced and few of them were adjusted in rehabilitation colonies and others are left in distress (Sarangi 2002).

The resettlement policies also fail to take into account the role of environmental and common-property resources in the pre-displacement economy and the quality of life that are threatened by the resettlement process such as family ties and community participation (Singh 1997: 5) gives impetus to the vibrancy of the resistance process.

**Table: 1**  
**A Conservative Estimate of Displacement and Rehabilitation by**  
**Various Projects (1951-1990)**

| Type of Project | Total Displaced | No. of the Rehabilitated | Persons Not Rehabilitated | % of Not Rehabilitated |
|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Mines           | 25,50,000       | 6,30,000                 | 19,20,000                 | 75.29                  |
| Dams            | 1,64,00,000     | 41,00,000                | 1,23,00,000               | 75.00                  |
| Industries      | 12,50,000       | 3,75,000                 | 8,75,000                  | 70.00                  |
| Wildlife        | 6,00,000        | 1,25,000                 | 4,75,000                  | 79.00                  |
| Others          | 5,00,000        | 1,50,000                 | 3,50,000                  | 70.00                  |
| Total           | 2,13,00,000     | 53,80,000                | 1,59,20,000               | 74.00                  |

Source: Cited in Kujur, J.M (2005), p.144

Routledge (1999) also suggests that different groups endow 'space' (and its associated resources) with a variety of different meanings, uses and values. Such differences give rise to various tensions and conflicts within society over the uses of space for individual and social purposes, and the control of space by the state and other forms of economic and cultural power such as transnational corporations. As a result particular places frequently become sites of conflict between different groups within society, which reflects concerns about ecology (struggles to prevent deforestation and pollution), economy (tribal struggle to secure land and forest for food), culture (struggles to protect integrity of tribal communities), and politics (struggles for local autonomy). In response to these different concerns, people frequently organize themselves by actively affirming local identity, culture and systems of knowledge as integral part of their resistance (Routledge 1999:77).

In Kashipur, in course of time due to the planned industrialization, the tribal lands and forests became the property of the state and people are debarred from their traditional rights to use forests for their survival. The planned development projects threatened to displace the tribal population from their land and forest which has been the nerve centre of the tribal peoples' economy. Tribal people use land and forest as the main source of food, shelter, culture and tribal corporate ethos. People attach different cultural meanings to land and forest which have been indispensable part of their life. As one tribal person expresses the importance of land and forest in their life

*"What is the use of monetary compensation? Money is meant to be spent. Once spent there is nothing left. This land and this forest sustained our forefathers. They are sustaining us now. They would sustain our children and progenies. We cannot leave them for a fistful of money. Without land and forest we would not survive. We shall not leave our land"* (Quoted from

*Bandopadhyay 1999)*

This is a resource system for survival. Their displacement not only erodes the traditional sources of livelihood (land, forest, etc.) and uproots people from their community way of life; it also dismantles their whole system of social organization, class, kinship, neighborhood, community living, social networks of everyday life and the political autonomy of the host society. Thus, the self sufficient and independent economic and cultural specificities of Kashipur's locale and the defense of these place-particular advantages provide the impetus behind the emergence of a relentless resistance.

At the level of environment, the tribals struggle to protect their local ecological niche from the threats of deforestation and pollution. The most important impact on environment is that dry red mud stacking<sup>11</sup> would give rise to huge amounts, nearly 150 tonnes of sodium hydroxide everyday and substantial quantities of water will be tapped for the refinery (Das 2001) which will affect the lives of the people adversely. To quote Martinez-Allier (quoted in Routledge 1999: 78) that "in the developing countries those affected by environmental degradation – poor tribals – are involved in struggles for economic and cultural survival which he says as 'environmentalism of the poor' whose fundamental concerns are the defense of livelihoods and of communal access to resources threatened by commodification, state take-overs and private appropriation by transnational corporations."

At the political level also, these movements challenge the state-centered character of the political process, articulating critiques of neo-liberal development ideology and the role of the state, and thereby increasing local autonomy. Panchayats Extension to the Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act, 1996<sup>12</sup> mandates that 'gram sabha or the panchayats to be consulted before making the acquisition of land into the scheduled areas for development projects and before resettling or rehabilitating persons affected by such projects in the scheduled areas'. Despite this, the tribal people have no say in the legitimacy of setting up development projects. The state never consults on the type of development people desire, thus violating the right to decide their own priorities as a part of right to development as an inalienable human right. Thus the struggle reflects the political significance.

#### **Identity and Interest**

The tribal identity was epitomized by a 'sense of place' – to protect the land or the soil and forest where the tribal life has been constituted. They have been living with it for generations and their sense of existence is associated with it which creates a common 'collective conscience' among the members of the community referred as the socio-cultural expressions of their identity. The question here is that how this collective identity is constructed or reconstructed among the tribal population? And how it helps organizing collective resistance? According to Surajit Sinha (1958) that the tribal community consciousness is negotiated and constructed through four basic elements such as habitat, economy, social structure and

ideology and all of them are inseparably built with land and forest<sup>13</sup>. For Baviskar this cultural identity sets the tribals apart from their dominant non-tribal neighbors as this identity is intrinsic to a way of life that incorporates distinctive relations with the land, forest and river. Tribal political action that seeks to secure rights to natural resources has been rooted in this consciousness of their distinctive tribal identity (Baviskar, 1997: 104).

According to Klandermans and Weerd (2000) in order to become the binding element of political protest, collective identity must become politicized. What, then, does make collective identity politically relevant? The answer to this question is that collectively defined grievances that produce a 'we' feeling and causal attributions that denote a 'they' that is held responsible for the collective grievances turn routine in-group-out-group dynamics conflictual. And if the out-group is an authority, as in the case of the tribals in Orissa, which is perceived by the in-group to be unjust, encounter with such an authority rapidly politicize collective identity, that is, an identity as a group defining itself in opposition against political authorities. This has especially become true when the state authorities in Orissa appeared to be unresponsive to group's claims and responded in an oppressive way through the use of its 'repressive ruling apparatus'<sup>14</sup> like police firing, beating, harassment, false arrest of the common people and threats.

But the question is that do all the people living in a community participate in the resistance? As an explanation to this Tonies argues, when individuals come together guided by their interests they develop an association (*gesellschaft*) but living in a community (*gemeinschaft*) fosters a feeling of intense solidarity and belongingness, though not based upon a convergence of interest (Jodhka, 2001: 18). This signifies that those who participate in the resistance are affected people who formed an association to fight against the political authority and thereby transformed their identity from a socio-cultural into a political one. For example, although the tribals and non-tribals have a common socio-cultural consciousness as members of a community, but all of them do not get displaced from their traditional sources of livelihood and sustenance such as land and forest. This is why the dalits and upper castes people do not participate in the movement.<sup>15</sup> This signifies that the politicization of identity is closely allied with interest association rather being innate to communal living where the former is formed by the voluntary coming together of the individuals and in the later the individual choice did not matter.

#### State-(Civil) Society Relations

The state and society relation in Kashipur is a very complex dynamic to understand. It is commonly considered that the tribals are uneducated, uncivilized, and barbarous. They remain outside the national mainstream. And, the state has always been trying to co-opt and assimilate the people and community in the national mainstream. The state creates an impression that it is benevolent and people can develop within the framework of state establishment (Majhi). The state uses both what Althusser says ideological and coercive

powers to make people faithful to it. The education system used to civilize the barbarous, illiterate and uncivilized tribals. Everything in their life is wrong – their food, dress, way of living and language – and needs to be refined. Values like national duty and national development are coined to give sanctity to the model. The ideological model, thus, prepares them to be assimilated into the nation and national mainstream. The state also uses violent and coercive means like police firing, indiscriminate arrest, and dragging people to court when they come on its way.

The relationship of the tribals with the agencies of state is historically marked by a sense of dissatisfaction. This is partly because of their frustrating experiences in the past, partly because of the shabby way in which they are being treated and partly because of the economic and social uncertainties surrounding their existence (Bandyopadhyay 1999). The region has long been neglected by the state and exploited for its natural resources and cheap labor provided by the tribal inhabitants. This remote region has become an underdeveloped-tribal-hinterland marked by widespread poverty, starvation deaths, large scale misappropriation and corruption which created an atmosphere of discontent and lack of confidence/trust towards the state and its agencies. As one tribal person expresses their experience with local administration:

*"We die of starvation. We die of diseases. The collector never comes to help us in these tragic moments. Now he has come at the behest of the companies. How can we trust him? (Quoted from Bandopadhyay 1999)"*

Kashipur is inhabited by different classes and communities. Out of the total population 62 percent belong to scheduled tribes, 23 percent scheduled castes and the rest 15 percent are other castes (Pathy 2003). It's the tribal people who resist the development projects of the state. The dalits and upper castes do not participate in the movement as they do not possess land and are not engaged in shifting cultivation. They support the industrialization process in the area in expectation that they would get job in the company. This signifies what Gramsci says the hegemonic nature of the state where the state exercises both coercion and consent over the society. And it is true that the state could never have consent from all its citizens. It has the consent from certain interest groups whose interests are in conformity with the state and the rest<sup>16</sup> are seen as opposition and anti-state. Thus, the resistance by the tribals could be seen as a counter hegemonic force to the state hegemony.

The state perceives that an anti-industry movement would tantamount to anti-state activity. Some of the non-governmental organizations who have been working in the area are presumed to be working behind inciting the tribals for opposing development and anti-state activities. The government was determined to 'teach a lesson' to the NGOs; as a result of which four non-governmental organizations<sup>17</sup> were de-registered and deprived of funds from the state and funding agencies. To suppress the counter-hegemonic reaction by the tribals,

the state asserted to violence and coercive methods of control like people have been beaten up, fired upon, jailed, lathi charged, harassed and implicated in false cases. It reached its peak on December 16, 2000, when three tribal people were shot and killed by police firing in Maikanch village. Recently, on January 2, 2006 while peacefully resisting against industrialization projects of the Government of Orissa, 12 tribal people were shot dead by the police firing in Kalinga Nagar. The state of Orissa expressed, what Max Weber called, 'the monopoly of using legitimate violence' to suppress the peaceful resistance of the tribals. It is adopting coercive means or what Gramsci called the war of maneuver (direct military/ violent confrontation) to suppress people's resistance and the tribals are adopting the war of positions (struggles in the cultural and moral realm) to protect their material interest and cultural identity (Otero 2004).

Thus, the historical relationship of discontent, lack of trust, poverty, negligence, exploitation, suppression and violence has increased the tenacity and stubbornness of collective resistance by the tribal population against the state. They are collectively fighting against the state authority. On September 18, 2001, nearly 3000-3500 people with their traditional weapons participated in the block (Kashipur) gherao programme, conducted meeting and presented a memorandum to the chief minister and district collector through the Block Development Officer where the main demands were cancellation of bauxite mining projects, pushing responsible officers and politicians on Maikancha firing, withdrawing of police cases, and the provision of irrigation, health and other facilities (Sarangi 2002).

#### Concluding Remarks

To conclude, the tribal regions of Orissa have turned into a 'terrain of resistance'<sup>18</sup> due to the increasing tension between the demands and interests of local communities on the one hand and the rehabilitation history and antithetical policies of the centralized and bureaucratic state apparatus on the other. Development has caused displacement, increased poverty, damaged environment, destroyed traditional cultures, and threatened tribal 'life world'. The place-specific advantages of the region provide an impetus to the resistance process. But, all the people living the community do not participate in the resistance process (as it is seen in Kashipur) that the dalits and upper castes do not participate in resistance but supports it) as long as their interests are not affected. Socio-cultural identity gets politicized when the material interests of the people are endangered and this paves the way to the formation of interest group associations to fight against the state authority. This resistance by people in defense of their traditional way of life has been suppressed through various coercive methods like police firing, harassment, lathi charge, false implications, etc. However, state's adoption to violent means to suppress the resistance has, indeed, increased the intensity of resistance in the tribal regions of Orissa.

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#### End Notes

1. Quoted in von Furer-Haimendorf, Christoph (1982) *Tribes of India: The Struggle for Survival*, Berkeley: University of California Press, Pp.313-322
2. Singh explains double contradiction that India lags behind the West on the path of modernity and development, and on the other without being modern it has produced the cultural conditions of the early emergence of post-modernity and post-modernist struggles in society. Although my position is almost similar with him, but here I argue, the tribal resistance more as a response to modernist and development project rather than in post-modernist terms.
3. Here I refer to the tribal communities living in the state of Orissa and fighting against the state planned Industrialization process in the region. And in this paper I use tribal as synonymous with the adivasis and indigenous peoples.
4. For more see Philip McMichael (1996) where he gives a brilliant explanation of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962) in describing environmentalism as a social movement. As a report mentions, taking into account the growing demand for steel in international market and its commitment towards industrialization and development, the present Biju Janata Dal-Bharatiya Janata Party alliance government in Orissa has signed up 43 memoranda of understanding for steel plants and 3 for aluminum refineries so far. See Das, Prafulla (2006) 'Churning in Orissa', *The Hindu*, January 13
5. Kashipur is under the jurisdiction of Rayagada district which has enormous amount of bauxite reserves and where 62 percent of the populations are tribals. It was one of the 43 special multi-purpose tribal blocks in the country in the mid-1950s and later included as one of the tribal development blocks meant for areas of higher tribal concentration. For more see Suguna Pathy (2003)
6. Here the risk is losing land and forest which have been their sources of livelihood for generations.
7. This section heavily draws from Sahoo, S (2005) 'Tribal Displacement and Human Rights Violations in Orissa', *Social Action*, Vol. 55, No. 2, April-June, Pp. 154-7
8. According to the 1999-2000 planning commission estimation 46 percent of Orissa's population is living below the poverty line as compared to the national average of 26 percent.
9. This is the plateau where Kashipur block exists

10. Indravati hydro project is very close to Kashipur block. Those distress oustees often come to Kashipur at the rainy period.
11. It is used for processing of alumina. For a detailed analysis and implication see Das, Vidhya (2001).
12. PESA seeks to provide significant protection to the tribals in the scheduled areas against any arbitrary, discretionary and motivated action by the state relating to land acquisition and resettlement and rehabilitation (R and R) package for the PAPs. For more see Bandyopadhyay, D (2004)
13. The tribals' life and economy are heavily dependent on land and forest. Their social structure is based on territorial cohesion and strong corporate identity developed through interaction and living with others. The ideological system is based on supernaturalism and animism where they believe in the reincarnation and transmigration of souls into various forms of life, namely, trees, birds, animals, etc which provide an ontology, an epistemology as well as a practical code of life. For a detail analysis see Sinha, Surajit (1958); Baviskar, A (1997)
14. The term was used by Althusser.
15. Dalits and upper castes do not have land, they do not do shifting cultivation and they are not dependent on the forest. Thus their interests are less affected by the project and hence are not interested to participate in the resistance movement. The other thing is that they also expect that once industries were set up, they will get some job in the factories.
16. These are mostly the tribal people who remain out side the state apparatus and don't belong to the ruling elite. Their interests are continuously marginalized and suppressed by the local elites, bureaucrats and state authorities as a whole. They basically belong to Kondh (who constitute 70 percent of the tribal population of the region and one of the largest tribal groups in India), Paraja, Jhodia and Penga tribal communities.
17. The four non-governmental organizations are Agragamee, Laxman Nayak Society, Ankuran, and Weaker Sections Integrated Development Agency (WIDA). These four agencies had been working among the tribals of this remote area for nearly two decades trying to raise their awareness, spreading literacy, training them in watershed management and better agricultural practices and the like. And this ban is considered as a direct assault on the institutions of civil society.
18. The term is borrowed from Paul Routledge (1993) where he gives a detailed analysis of why social movements occur where they do by taking two case studies like the Baliapal Movement and the Chipko Movement in India. For more see Paul Routledge (1993)

## SECULARISM IN INDIAN POLITICS : THEORY AND PRACTICE

R. Rajarajan

*India, in recent years, has been witnessing an escalation of religious revivalism, fundamentalism and religio-communal identification. The rising tide of these fissiparous forces threatens to engulf Indian social and political life. Against this backdrop, secularism has come to the centre stage of social and political discourse in the country and various critical issues pertaining to its interpretation, practice and application are being raised. Secularism is thus one of the fundamental tenets of the Constitution, yet the declaration of India as a secular State came only with the enactment of the 42nd Amendment to the Constitution (1976). This paper deals with Secularism in Indian Politics: Theory and Practice.*

### Introduction

Secularism is thus one of the fundamental tenets of the Constitution, yet the declaration of India as a secular State came only with the enactment of the 42nd Amendment to the Constitution (1976). The Preamble now proclaims India as a secular State. The Constitution establishes no State religion nor does it create any category of preferred citizens. Secularism is reinforced through material provisions of the Constitution. Indeed, it is writ large in the entire Constitution. Fundamental rights are guaranteed to every Indian citizen regardless of religion, caste, creed, race or sex. Besides this, the Constitution expressly guarantees individual and collective freedom of religion, which includes the freedom to profess, practice and propagate religion and grants religious denominations the freedom to establish and maintain institutions for religious and charitable purposes along with the freedom to manage their own affairs in matters of religion. No special taxes can be levied for promotion of any particular religion. Imparting of religious instruction in State-run educational institutions is prohibited and no person can be compelled to attend religious instruction or religious worship in educational institutions receiving State aid. However, keeping in view the essential quintessence of Indian society, imbued in superstition, obscurantism and myths and the all pervasive role of religion, it was generally recognized that the State had to intervene in religion in order to remove the repugnant socio-religious practices inimical to democracy and modernization. Hence while freedom of religion is guaranteed, it is subject to certain limitations in the interest of public order, morality and health<sup>1</sup>.

The ideology and practice of secularism in actual fact, however, is confronted with multi-faceted and multi-dimensional challenges. At one level, critics assert that secularism as adopted and interpreted in the Indian context is itself to blame for the crisis in which it finds itself. Majority communalists attack secularism in order to create a Hindu vote bank by arousing anti-minority sentiments. Interestingly, the BJP/VHP/RSS ideologues do not, in so many words, reject secularism as such, but advocate what they choose to call 'positive secularism'. Branding Indian secularism as 'pseudo-secularism', they equate it with appeasement of minorities, particularly Muslims. Minorities criticize secularism on the grounds that it has failed to protect

their interests, as well as lives and property, particularly during communal riots. At the same time they espouse secularism not for its intrinsic value, but in order to protect their communal interests, perpetuate their personal laws and minority status<sup>2</sup>.

At another level, secularism is challenged by the ascendancy of the forces of communalism, fundamentalism and religious revivalism, accompanied by violence. Communal riots continue unabated. Meerut, Bombay, Bhiwandi, Ahmedabad, Surat and Hyderabad and most recently Gujarat, are just a few cases in point. The 1980s and 1990s have witnessed violent secessionist movements in Punjab and Kashmir and an upsurge in the use of religious symbols and terminology in politics<sup>3</sup>.

The aggressive resurgence of majority communalism constitutes one of the major threats to secularism in India. The Hindu fundamentalists propound the concepts of Hindutva and Hindu State, reveal an explicit anti-minority bias, expressed through their tirade against minority appeasement, separate personal laws, Art. 370, and existence of Aligarh Muslim University, etc. This leads to fears of establishment of a theocratic State. On the other hand, minority communalism, too, has become more assertive and aggressive as exemplified by the agitation over the Shah Bano judgment and the vehement support of separate personal laws, particularly in the wake of the Supreme Court judgment in the Sarla Mudgal case. Significantly, the issues emphasised by the protagonists of both majority and minority communalism are limited to religio-communal ones. Issues of socio-economic development are thus overshadowed by fundamentalism, revivalism and violence<sup>4</sup>.

Communalism and communal politics constitute one of the major challenges to secularism. The problem is, however, further enhanced by the lack of homogeneity amongst members of each community, which leads to the problem of intra-community conflicts. Intercaste conflict, a persistent and recurrent phenomenon, has become more intense and pronounced in recent years.

The resurgence of non-secular forces is accompanied by the manipulation of religion for electoral gains by the political parties. The electoral process is thus vitiated by the predominance of communal and chauvinistic forces. Issues like Ram Janambhoomi-Babri Masjid controversy are given prominence for electoral gains and are yielding rich dividends. This communalisation of the political process is accompanied by the emergence of a "new genre of political activists-the Ram bhakts". Who are attempting to historical wrongs. In the process religion too gets politicised<sup>5</sup>. Increasingly, political roles are being appropriated by mullahs, sadhus/sadhus, pundits and jathedars, who attempt to direct the nation's future polity by suggesting amendments in what they call the 'anti-Hindu Constitution', marking the contours of a Hindu Rashtra as well as giving directions to voters as to how to vote.

The State, too, has fallen prey to the pressure and lobbying of communal organisations and groups, as illustrated by the enactment of the Muslim Women's (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986, banning of 'Satanic Verses', and opening of the locks on the Babri Masjid. Successive Governments, it is felt, have played the ethnic/communal card under the-cloak of secularism in order to promote their own sectional interests<sup>6</sup>. The Government has followed inconsistent policies in dealing with communalists and communalism. Political convenience has been the guiding principle in following a vacillating policy, reflecting an inability to deal with the crisis<sup>7</sup>.

### Concept Definition

The term 'secularism' originally non-Indian, is now part of the every day vocabulary of Indian politics and society. The term 'secular state' is commonly used in present day India to describe the relationship that exists, or which ought to exists, between the state and religion<sup>8</sup>.

Secularism defines itself in relation to religion; and always, every where, even when they are understood to be conceptually separate, cultures and religions remain deeply intertwined. This is even more so in cases where the very distinction between religion and culture is hard to draw. One of the most striking developments in Independent India is the successful emergence of an avowedly secular state encompassing the bulk of the world's Hindus.

The ideal of secularism holds great importance for the plural society of independent India. Secularism, accordingly, was accepted as the mainstay of the Constitution, but was not precisely defined. An analysis of the debates of the Constituent Assembly, however, reveals a rejection of the Western concept of secularism, that is, absolute separation of State and religion, and acceptance of the Indian concept of 'Sarva Dharma Samabhava' or 'equal regard for all religions'<sup>9</sup>.

### Use of The Term In The Constitution

Till 42nd Amendment to the Constitution, neither in the preamble, nor in any article of the Constitution, there was any direct reference to the term 'Secularism' to determine the character of the Indian State. Moreover, a number of efforts to secure the inclusion of the word 'secular' in the fundamental law of the land did not find favour with the framers of the Constitution<sup>10</sup>. Prof. K.T. Shah, a member of the Constituent Assembly, urged in the Assembly, when the draft provision concerning rights relating to religion was under discussion in the Assembly, made another attempt for a new article to be inserted. "The State in India being secular shall have no concern with any religion, creed or profession of faith; and shall observe an attitude of absolute neutrality in all matters relating-to the religion of any class of its citizens or other persons in the Union. This motion was also negative without any discussion in the Assembly<sup>11</sup>.

The word 'secularism' was introduced in the Constitution for the first time in the 27th year of the Republic. It was- added only in the Preamble at the time of 42nd Amendment of the

Constitution. But till today it is a controversy whether Preamble is a part of the Constitution or not. In Berubari case the Supreme Court held that it is not a part of the Constitution. However, it reversed its judgment in Kesvananda Bharti's case in which it held that Preamble is a part of the Constitution<sup>12</sup>.

Another effort was made during the Janata regime. In 1978, 45th Amendment Bills proposed the inclusion of the term in Art. 366 along with the definition apart from so many other things. Since at that time Congress Party was in the 2/3 majority in the Rajya Sabha and Janata Party in the Lok Sabha, this amendment could be cleared in both the Houses only as a result of a compromise formula. The casualty of this compromise was the deletion of the term from the proposed text of the amendment of the Constitution.

The word 'secular' is not written in the Constitution, but it does not imply that the founding fathers of the Constitution had any doubt about the nature of the Indian state being secular<sup>13</sup>. If we go through the debates of the Constituent Assembly, we find ready reference that 'India would be a secular state'. Lokanath Misra asserted in the Assembly: "Deliberately we have chosen that our state is a secular state and we have tried to get rid of all the wranglings of religion." K.M. Munshi, also remarked in this context: "In the present set-up that we are now creating under this Constitution, there is a secular State."

#### No State Religion In India

In India even though the Hindus form the vast majority of the populations, Hinduism is not given any special place in the society. All religions are given equal recognition and protection. There is no state religion in India. Moreover, under the Government of India Act, 1935, and previous to that also, there was an Ecclesiastical Department and it was a reserved subject under the control of the Governor-General. No such department in the Government of India now exists, nor such a department can be created under the Constitution<sup>14</sup>.

The Constitution of India under Art. 25 unequivocally assures "Freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion." The scope of this article is very wide and meaningful. Apart from so many other things, it declares, "The State or the Government cannot aid one religion or give preference to one religion as against another. Therefore, it is obliged to be absolutely secular in character." It means that in India no particular religion will receive state patronage<sup>15</sup>.

When the provision was under discussion in the Constituent Assembly, there was a school of opinion in favour of India being made a Hindu state, just as Pakistan has declared itself to be an Islamic State. Lokanath Misra asserted in the Assembly, "If you accept religion, you must accept Hinduism as it is practiced by an overwhelming majority of the people of India." But

the makers of the Constitution rejected this idea. The constitution provides to all persons equally 'freedom of conscience and the right to profess, practice and propagate religion' without any discrimination.

### Individual's Freedom of Religion

The necessary corollary to the absence of any state religion is the freedom of religion to all. It is generally considered and accepted as one of the essential ingredients of a secular state. As stated already, Art. 25 declares 'freedom of religion'. It guarantees freedom not only to the citizens of India but, also to all persons including aliens. It deals with particularly the individual aspect of religious liberty, which 'consists of his freedom to choose a particular faith he likes, to believe in and to manifest his belief in such overt acts as are prescribed by his religion. This right is further supplemented by the freedom to practice and propagate religion<sup>16</sup>.

Though there was general agreement in the Constituent Assembly on the freedom of conscience and on the clause "To profess and practice" yet there was some opposition to the inclusion of the word 'propagate'. Particularly, the Hindu members in the Assembly totally disagreed with the view that the propagation of religion should be considered a legitimate aspect of religious freedom. But the overwhelming majority of members did not agree with the view. While explaining the word 'propagate,' K.M. Munshi remarked in the Assembly, "Even if the word were not there, he assured, under the Freedom of speech which the Constitution guarantees it will be open to any religious community to persuade other people to join their faith."

Furthermore, most of the constitutions of the world that provide freedom of religion, do not explicitly guarantee right to propagate religion as a justifiable fundamental right. The Federal Constitution of the Swiss Confederation simply declares under Art. 49, "Freedom of creed and conscience is inviolable." The Constitution of U.S.S.R. under Art. 124 provides: "In order to ensure to citizens freedom of conscience, the church in the U.S.S.R. is separated from the state, and the school from the church. Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognised for all citizens<sup>17</sup>". Further, the Constitution of the People's Republic of China says in Art. 36, "Citizens of the People's Republic of China enjoy freedom of religious belief." And the Constitution of Japan under Art. 20 reads: "Freedom of religion is guaranteed to all."

The individual right of freedom of religion as amplified in Indian Constitution is of far greater importance, particularly for the religious minorities for their smooth development, it is further in consonance with the provisions of United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, which say: "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion: this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance."

While the right guaranteed in the Indian constitution under Art. 25 is a right of the individual, the Constitution conferred this right to the community or any section thereof under Art. 26 which provides freedom to manage religious affairs, "Subject to public order, morality and health, every religious denomination or any section thereof shall have the right (a) to establish and maintain institutions for religious and charitable purposes; (b) to manage its own affairs in matters of religion; (c) to own and acquire movable and immovable property; and (d) to administer such property in accordance with law."

The different sects and sub-sects of the same religion can legitimately come within the purview of this article. The word religion is not defined in the Constitution<sup>18</sup>. And the Supreme Court of India has from time to time defined the term very liberally in a number of cases. "All rituals and observances, ceremonies and modes of worship are regarded as integral parts of religion" and each religious denomination enjoys complete autonomy in the matter of deciding what rites and ceremonies are essential according to the tenets of the religion it holds. Hence the Scope of the freedom of religion in India is considerably wide and broad<sup>19</sup>.

#### **Limitations on The Right To Freedom of Religion**

It is a matter of controversy whether the right to freedom of religion as provided under Arts. 25 and 26 is absolute or subject to certain limitations. So far as the text of these articles is concerned both the provisions are subject to 'public order, morality and health: and in Art. 25 there are two more exceptions. First, this freedom is subject to the other provisions of Part III of the Constitution and secondly, under clause 2(3): "Nothing in this Article shall affect the operation of any existing law or prevent the State from making any law (a) regulating or restricting any economic, financial, political or other secular activity which may be associated with religious practice; (b) providing for social welfare and reform or the throwing open of Hindu religious institutions of a public character to all classes and sections of Hindus."

This means freedom of religion is not absolute and unlimited. For example, certain actions which are sanctioned by some religions are prohibited by law framed under these limitations. Human sacrifice is permissible by certain religious but it is a crime under the law. Judiciary in India has also, on various occasions, upheld the view that freedom of religion is not an absolute one. In a case *Masud Alarn v. Commissioner of Police*, it was decided that banning of electrical loudspeakers calling for prayer may be valid. "No doubt every religion has a right to have propaganda. But when such propaganda is made through loudspeakers in a crowded and noisy locality to the detriment of public moral, health or order, it is prohibited by Article 25. A loudspeaker may take one to hell instead of Heaven by the very volume of its sound<sup>20</sup>.

Similarly Chapter XV, Sections 295 to 298 of the Indian Penal Code deal with the offences relating to religions, e.g. Injuring or defiling place of worship with intent to insult the religion of any

class, disturbing religious assembly, trespassing on burial places, etc. Even though these actions might be sanctioned by the offender's own religion, these are offences under the law. As stated already, 'the right to freedom of religion' is also subject to the other provisions of Part III of the Constitution relating to Fundamental Right<sup>21</sup>. The meaning of the clause can be explained with examples, "The practice of untouchability (forbidden in Article 17) could not be protected under Article 25. Land can be compulsorily acquired by the state with compensation under Article 31, despite the fact that it is a part of a religious endowment."

It appears from the language of the Indian Constitution and other enactments that this right is subject to state control and restrictions extensively. But if we study the debates of the Constituent Assembly it appears that there was much resentment and disagreement among the members of the Assembly regarding the interference of the state in matters of religion, Lokanath Misra remarked, in this context—"If religion is beyond the ken of our State. Let us clearly say so and delete all reference to rights relating to religion." He further says: "This unjust generosity of tabooing religion and yet making propagation of religion a fundamental right it somewhat uncanny and dangerous<sup>22</sup>.

A number of authorities on the subject have also endorsed the view that 'this limitation of the freedom of conscience of the individual is due to either bad drafting of the article or indiscreet borrowing rather than any conscious desire on the part of the fathers of the Constitution. From the debates of the Constituent Assembly it becomes very clear that members were much concerned with guaranteeing to the individual absolute freedom as regards the choice of his religion. If we observe the practices of the Government of India vis-a-vis the freedom of religion since the commencement of the Constitution, we find ample instances where the Government felt hesitant in interfering with the matters of religion of the people<sup>23</sup>. The provisions of 'uniform civil code for the citizens' and 'ban on cow slaughter' are still lying as promises in the chapter of Directive Principles of State Policy of the Constitution. This right certainly appears absolute, if not by law, at least by practices.

#### **Religious Instruction**

The Indian Constitution guarantees not only religious freedom both individual and collective response without any discrimination, it also lawfully permits to propagate religion: and one form of propagating religion is by means of religious instructions in educational institutions<sup>24</sup>. This is provided under Article 28 with a few "(1) No religious instruction shall be provided in any educational institution wholly maintained out of State funds. (2) Nothing in Clause (1) shall apply to an educational institution which is administered by the State but has been established under any endowment or trust which requires that religious instruction shall be imparted in such a situation. (3) No person attending any educational institution recognized by the State or receiving aid out

of State funds shall be required to take part in any religious instruction that may be imparted in such institution or to attend any religious worship that may be conducted in such institution or in any premises attached thereto unless such person or, if such person is a minor, his guardian has given his consent thereto<sup>25</sup>.

The clause regarding the Right to Freedom of Religion had to face much criticism in and outside the Constituent Assembly<sup>26</sup>. What is banned under Clause 1 of this article is neutralized under Clause 3 to a large extent. Prof. K.T. Shah moved the following amendment to this clause in the Constituent Assembly: "No religious instruction shall be provided by the State in any educational institution wholly or partly maintained out of State funds<sup>27</sup>.

"The direct religious education is permissible under the Constitution in three out of four types of educational institutions in India. The ban on such instruction is only in the case of institutions which are wholly maintained out of state funds<sup>28</sup>. But, if one keenly observes the debates of the Constituent Assembly one finds that this type of attitude which was adopted by the framing fathers of the Constitution was neither the result of option for the principle of neutrality in regard to religion nor due to the high values of the principles of secularism. They were rather compelled to follow this line on the ground that the Indian society is composed of multiplicity of religions<sup>29</sup>. Dr. Ambedkar admitted it in the Assembly: "The second difficulty is much more real than the first, namely, the multiplicity of religions, and to provide religious instruction in all the denominations<sup>30</sup>.

### Conclusion

Secularism needs to acquire a promotion of secular principles that are of paramount importance in the Indian body politic. Secularism requires more than adherence to a policy of religious toleration. It is comparable to a policy of social transformation and change.

The universalization of secular principles should enable secularism not to degenerate into an institutionalized policy of appeasement or domination of religious groups based on the needs of the day. A consensual framework that is based on mutual respect and common principles, not separate beliefs protected by law, needs to develop. The evolution of and adherence to such predetermined but definable principles of state and individual value based behaviour is essential if secularism is to become a universalist social and community ideology and not remain a purely political instrument of societal regulation within the contemporary Indian scenario. The government's role is that of facilitating understanding and tolerance for different religious beliefs, both majority, and minority, without promoting or obliquely supporting any one belief. Achieving this would mean divorcing public expressions of religious conduct from the Indian national identity, which is a difficult task in the maelstrom of Indian democracy. However, gradual change in this direction can occur since globalization and increased educational opportunities for men and

women have converted tradition into a benchmark for progress, not a bastion or device for retarding socio-religious changes within Indian society.

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## CONTENDING FRAMEWORKS FOR FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS : AN APPRAISAL

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*Foreign policy analysis, which is an important sub-field of political science, remains highly underdeveloped in India. This is because the scholars are not adequately exposed to the theoretical literature in the field. The study of foreign policy is dominated by the area study approach. This approach though informative does not contribute to generating rigorous analytical and explanatory knowledge. This paper attempts to review the existing theoretical literature in the field with a view to exposing student of international relations in India to the contending analytical perspectives for analysing and explaining foreign policy.*

Foreign policy analysis, which is an important sub-field of political science, remains highly underdeveloped in India. It is not merely the dearth of literature but also its quality that is rather poor in nature. Exceptions notwithstanding, the bulk of the literature is characterised by descriptive, chronological, 'relational' studies, such as Indo-US relations, Indo-Soviet relations, Indo-Pak relations, etc. The characteristic mode of such studies is one in which newspaper reportage is chronologically organised on the basis of loosely defined notions of national interest with little or no effort towards either identifying the dominant patterns and trends in the relationships under study or formulating rigorous explanations that would account for them. In the final analysis, the literature produced in India has remained short of making a significant or perceptible contribution to the development of theoretical knowledge in the sub-field.

There seem to be two major inter-related reasons for this state of affairs: one, the domination of the 'area study' approach in the analysis of international relations and, two, the procurement policy and financial capacities of most libraries in the country. Lack of funds, and perhaps no less so the lack of exposure, prevent these university libraries in India from procuring journals specifically devoted to theoretical writings. Overwhelmingly published in developed countries, these journals are exorbitantly priced and cannot be afforded within the meagre resources available to university libraries. The latter are therefore left with the only alternative of subscribing mainly to journals published in India where the research agenda is shaped by area study approaches that play the part of peer culture in determining the lines of research. This is a vicious cycle which in part at least may be broken through vigorous debate between contending approaches in the field. This paper makes an attempt to critically appraise the theoretical literature in the sub-field of foreign policy analysis with a view to exposing Indian scholars to the theoretical literature in the field and thereby help improve the quality of research.

One of the constant preoccupations of scholars and analysts is to explain 'events' occurring within states and between states. Put simply they seek to explain why states make particular foreign policy choices or why they behave towards each other the way they do. These exercises of explication result in a variety of approaches and models. However, the domination of the state centric approach, where the state is treated as a billiard ball, has led scholars to cast foreign policy decision making into a cause-effect relationship. As states seek to enhance and protect their national interests occurrences in the external milieu or behaviour of other states is seen to have a direct relation to the foreign policy choices. However, scholars like Sprout and Sprout, Rosenau, Korany, Holsti, Allison and the like sought to break away from this narrow understanding of foreign policy and international relations and attempted to study it in a more holistic manner. Here factors other than those arising from the external sources are seen to have an impact or influence on the decision makers. Although they do not provide a theory for the study of foreign policy, they have put forth frameworks or models that seek to explain the foreign policy of states as well as make predictions about them.

This paper is a modest effort to schematically deal with some of the approaches in the study of foreign policy. However, our purpose is not to deal with the frameworks or approaches individually but to try to examine them generically. This will, we hope, generate dialogue between the different traditions and contribute towards the advancement of the discipline.

#### **Contending frameworks for Foreign Policy Analysis :**

Over the past three decades there has been a proliferation of contending frameworks for foreign policy analysis. On the basis of their explanatory schemas these frameworks may be categorised into four generic groups. The latter although useful, obviously entails a degree of unavoidable simplification of the conceptual intricacies of the given frameworks. The four analytical perspectives are: a) idiosyncratic; b) governmental; c) societal; and d) systemic.

#### **The Idiosyncratic Perspective**

This perspective has a vast body of literature depicting sophistication in conceptualisation and rich innovation in technique. It contends that foreign policy is the product of the perceptions and responses of the leadership, that is the foreign policy decision makers.<sup>1</sup> The foreign policy decisions are based on the perceptions of the decision makers of the international environment as well as in the goals of the states. The decision makers' perceptions are formed by their worldview, ideology, personality and the like. Therefore, this perspective explains foreign policy by analysing the mindsets of the main actors in the foreign policy making

edifice.

The idiosyncratic perspective has the merit of systemically drawing attention of the students of foreign policy to the important role played by the decision makers in the formulation and conduct of foreign policy.<sup>1</sup> This has been ignored by the realist approach because of its assumption that states in the international context are unitary rational actors. Notwithstanding this merit, the idiosyncratic perspective because of its exclusive emphasis on psychological aspect suffer from the drawback of making foreign policy appear to be an erratic and irrational activity.<sup>2</sup> It suggests this picture of foreign policy because it neglects the domestic, regional and international contexts, which not only shape the foreign policy agenda and options but also play down considerably the autonomy of individual eccentricities in foreign policy making and implementations. In other words, the internal and external determinants have a major bearing on encouraging or discouraging idiosyncrasies of decision makers in foreign policy making and conduct. Furthermore, this perspective does not provide analytical categories and schemes for conceptualising foreign policy behaviour or interactions. Thus, the idiosyncratic perspective as an independent approach has very limited explanatory and descriptive capacity. It needs to be situated within the domestic and external contexts of foreign policy if it is to provide meaningful explanations.

#### **The Governmental Perspective :**

This perspective has a limited body of literature which is of course steadily increasing, reflecting its growing popularity among scholars. Like the idiosyncratic perspective, the governmental approach or bureaucratic politics model as it is also referred to, is an effort to correct the shortcomings of the realist approach. It refutes the claim of realism that state is a unitary actor in the international context and also that foreign policy is an act of 'rational' choice. Instead, it contends that foreign policy is a 'political resultant of bargaining process' involving different government departments, military services, and subdivisions thereon. The political resultant which finds the greatest consensus among, or support of, the main participants becomes the foreign policy decision. In other words, the bureaucratic politics model explains foreign policy by analysing the foreign policy making organisational structure and processes therein.

This perspective does not emphasise the psychological dimension of the decision makers but stresses that they are guided by their own career and departmental interests while participating in the making of foreign policy. The decision makers try to influence foreign policy making in such manner and direction which would maximise their own and their departments' involvement and influence.

Yet it suffers from a number of shortcomings. Firstly, it ignores the influence of domestic and external sources of foreign policy. Secondly, it overemphasises the significance of inter and intra-bureaucratic interests and interactions, and underplays the role of the leadership. Some recent studies on the relationship between leadership and bureaucracy have shown that the ultimate say is with the former.

Finally, it does not offer much help for the conceptualisation of foreign policy behaviour.

#### The Societal Perspective:

This is a relatively recent approach though its philosophical antecedents are old. It explains foreign policy by considering the socio-economic, cultural and political structures and processes within the state. It focuses on factors such as size, location, resource endowments, culture, socio-economic structures, class and elite structures, socio-economic development, economic and military capability, political institutions and processes and the like.<sup>4</sup> Depending upon the ideological underpinnings of the framework, theorists of this persuasion have alternately argued that a state's foreign policy behaviour is meant to strengthen and stabilise the ruling elite or the ruling classes in addition to protecting the territorial integrity of the country.

Some students of foreign policy have argued that this perspective provides a better understanding of the foreign policies of third world countries as compared to the realist approach which explain foreign policy in terms of protection of national security only. The exponents of this perspective have argued that foreign policies of developing countries have three major objectives: defence of nation's independence from perceived threat, mobilisation of external resources for the country's socio-economic development and achievement of domestic socio-political stability and leadership legitimacy.<sup>5</sup> The societal perspective is, no doubt, an improvement on realism which neglects the domestic structures in the explanation of foreign policy. However, the societal approach suffers from the reverse shortcoming of neglecting the role of the external factors.

#### The Systemic Perspective :

This is the oldest and most enduring approach to foreign policy analysis. It has undergone several modifications and refinements over the years. Earlier it fell under the rubric of realism but with the inclusion of terms and categories from system theory, it came to be known as the systemic perspective. According to his perspective, foreign policy is a function of the conditions that prevail outside the country. The international system lacking a central political authority is anarchic and lends itself to a self help system where all states have to protect their security

and independence from encroachment by others. In addition to building military capability, states resort to foreign policy to mitigate the perceived threats and expand the sphere of their independence.

For this purpose, states adopt various foreign policy strategies such as alignment, non-alignment, neutralism or isolationism, which guide their external interactions. The foreign policy strategy and ensuing interactions are mainly shaped . by the distribution of power in the international system, or what is referred to as the international system structure.<sup>6</sup>

There is no denying the fact that external power realities in the anarchic international system are important determinants of foreign policy.

However, explaining foreign policy exclusively in terms of international power structure would be myopic. More specifically, the systemic perspective is wanting in two respects. Firstly, it excludes international institutions, laws, regimes and normative processes such as ideological and political movements. Secondly, it underplays the domestic sources of foreign policy. These omissions have severely limited the explanatory potential of the systemic perspective.

This brief review of the contending approaches clearly indicates that none of the approaches is individually adequate for providing comprehensive explanations of foreign policy, and there is, therefore the need to integrate them.

#### Towards an Integrative Framework :

Some scholars recognising the partial explanatory character of these approaches have attempted to formulate overarching frameworks which integrate the insights of the various perspectives discussed earlier. While it cannot be denied that there are differences between these overarching frameworks, it can also be easily recognised that there are not many substantial conceptual differences between them, at least in their general construction.<sup>7</sup> Based upon the realist assumption that the international system is anarchic and that states are the principal actors in international relations, these frameworks divide foreign policy activity into five inter-related analytical categories: a) motivation; b) determinants; c) strategy and objectives; d) decision making structure; and e) foreign policy behaviour, constituting interactions and roles. This five fold categorisation is self-explanatory, requiring no detailed clarification and it will suffice to briefly state the denotation and connotation of these terms.

'Motivation' describes the desires of states in the international system. These desires are shaped by the international system structure, the capability of the states, and their history,

traditions and ideology. 'Determinants' indicate the factors and forces, both internal and external, which affect foreign policy. 'Foreign policy objectives' refer to the specific goals which a state pursues in the international system. The term 'strategy' means the line of action or the general orientation a state adopts to actualise its foreign policy goals. Foreign policy strategy shapes the external behaviours and roles. Both objectives and strategy are shaped by the interactions between the motivations that are relatively abstract and the determinants which are more substantive and concrete factors and forces.

Foreign policy decision making structure includes the formal organisation for foreign policy making and implementation as well as the processes that go within it, including influences from outside which have a bearing on the processes. It includes interactions between the leadership and official as well as non official foreign policy elites. The foreign policy motivations and determinants are mediated by the decision making system to formulate the foreign policy objectives and strategy. Likewise, they translate the interactions between foreign policy objectives and strategy and the changing internal and external settings into specific foreign policy actions and roles. Although the structure of the decision making system and processes therein significantly shape the nature of the mediation of the decision making system between foreign policy motivations and determinants as well as strategy and the changing domestic and international environment, its mediatory role is considerably constrained by the strategy once it has been clearly spelt out.

The determinants or factors that influence the foreign policy making process do not operate in the simple fashion as it might appear from the categorisations sketched out in this paper. The aim of this exercise is to single out and highlight distinct factors in the ensemble of determinants whose complex interplay marks out the field of foreign policy through a heuristic review of different perspectives. The paper attempts to underline the importance of each factor which may act on decision makers but whose salience may vary from state to state. The objective is not to compartmentalise the determinants as exclusive self-contained entities. At times all determinants may act in concert while at other times only one or more may be instrumental.

It is none the less important to note that the categorisation enables one to identify or locate the patterns in the foreign policy behaviour and thereby understand why states act as they do.

It is by grasping the variations in these patterns that we can come closer to knowing how to respond and what to predict in the difficult terrain of foreign relations. The paper therefore argues the necessity of keeping in focus the complex web of determinants involved in the

making of foreign policies in order to arrive at an adequate - i.e., more integrated and dynamic - understanding of the field of foreign policy studies.

#### Notes and References :

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6. For a representative sample of this perspective see, Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, (New Delhi, 1976); Mortan A. Kaplan, *System and Process in International Politics*, (New York, 1957); Richard Rosecrance, *Action and Reaction in World Politics*, (Boston, 1963); and Kenneth Waltz, *Man, the State and War*, (New York, 1954), also

Waltz's recent book, Theory of International Politics, (Reading, 1979). There are major conceptual differences among these scholars but it is not possible to discuss them here.

7. For example see K. J. Holsti, International Politics : A Framework for Analysis, (New Delhi, 1981); and also Dessouki and Korany, op.cit.

## BOOK REVIEW

**GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION: PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY IN INDIA, Shibani Kinkar Chaube, K.P. Bagchi & Company, Kolkata, 2006, pp. 216, Rs. 350/-**

This book is based on research work under a fellowship awarded by Hon'ble Speaker of the Lok Sabha in July 2000 on intra-governmental relations in India. This work critically analyzes the intra-governmental relations in India and highlights the role of opposition in the working of parliamentary democracy. In the first chapter the author clearly mentioned that Government will be understood as comprising the legislature and executive, and intra-governmental relations will mean the relations between the Union Legislature and the Union Executive including bureaucracy. The author keeps the judiciary outside the domain of government and has regarded judiciary as a cardinal principle of democratic government. With the help of various Constituent Assembly debates, provisions of government acts, memorandum forwarded by the then dignitaries, committees, arguments etc. the author has critically analyzed the vital issues before the Constituent Assembly, such as the opposition, shaping of parliamentary government, president, fundamental rights etc. The second chapter deals with the evaluation and development of British Parliament as an institution of parliamentary government alongwith the essential aspect of democracy such as ministerial responsibility, individual responsibility of ministers, collective responsibility, responsibility and representation, confidence motion, dissolution, diminution of ministerial responsibility, conflict and cooperation, dilution of opposition. The author has comprehensively discussed and analyzed the above started heading in the chapter and given a good number of historical evidences.

In the third chapter, namely Parliamentary Democracy in India, the author has clearly pointed out that parliamentary democracy in India is a world apart from the ancient tribal systems of consensual gerontocracy. The legislature in India which was created by British was totally different from the traditional sabhas and panchas. The Indian leaders accepted parliamentary democracy very similar to British model because the freedom movement in India evolved and developed under the British Raj and government structure. Though India chose the British Model of parliamentary democracy, there are some critical differences between the two systems. India has written constitution, executive power vested in president, etc. The author has put some other issues in this chapter like question of 'Discretion' regarding President of India, a discussion on dissolution of Lok Sabha in 1999 when A.B. Vajpayee was the P.M. and AI DMK withdrew its support from the Government before the President K.R. Narayanan. Other topics are the limits to Cabinet advice. Powers of President where the author has focused on those powers where president acts on his own and not on the advice of Council of Ministers. These powers are to ensure that the government runs on parliamentary lines; and a brief account on Veto Powers of President has also been given. The

parliamentary lines; and a brief account on Veto Powers of President has also been given. The other aspects of this chapter are the pre-eminence of the Prime Minister, Legal Responsibility of President, Legislative Institutions in Colonial India, the Indian Parliament and the Government Fund. The fourth chapter deals with various issues highlighting relationships between President, Legislature, Executive and people (the master of governments). The author tries to bring out those factors which influence and stir the relations of above stated democratic institutions. The relationship between President and Prime Minister largely depends upon the personality of President and the trust of Prime Minister he enjoys.

The author held this view that responsibility is the core of the relationship between the legislature and the executive in a parliamentary democracy. He briefly differentiates between accountability and responsibility: where accountability is a bureaucratic concept implying liability of the subordinate, responsibility is a political concept implying liability of a person to be removed from office in case of the loss of confidence of the patron(s). In India, where multi-party system didn't prevail until 1977, the opposition was never able to present itself as a viable national alternative to the Congress party. In the new context, the notion of a responsible opposition did involve a responsibility not to the ruling party but to the political system. The author has given example of first no-confidence motion in Indian politics. It was moved by Braj Raj Singh on 31 August 1961 against Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru's government. The fifth and sixth chapters deal with no-confidence motion and the concepts of confidence and no-confidence. He starts with a brief account of composition of opposition in India. He has discussed how the Congress hegemony was broken 1967 onwards, and also discusses various instances of no-confidence motion in Indian parliamentary democracy. The author has mentioned and maintained this notion that parliamentary debate is a barometer of the political morale of a country. In the seventh chapter – Between Opposition and Cooperation - the author has convincingly stated that a successful parliamentary democracy can function only through a judicious combination of opposition and cooperation - the means by which this combination is achieved fall under the name of parliamentary control.

In a party-based democracy the effectiveness of no-confidence motion debates and the confidence debates is curtailed by discipline and whips of the respective parties, but is not disappeared. Positively in a coalition situation the debate is becoming very effective because of the relative autonomy of the constituent parties. In order to understand the concept of opposition, accountability, no-confidence motion in Indian politics the author has focused on other related dimensions and aspects of government and legislation such as, powers and responsibilities within the government, the meaning of accountability, the status and role of the bureaucrats in India, parliamentary control, legislation, policy decisions, financial control, monitoring the executive works, parliamentary committees in India, etc.

In the last chapter, the author has concluded his work mentioning that if politics is about power, power is about consent or conflict. Between consent and conflict lies the concept

the importance of opposition in parliamentary system that opposition in parliamentary politics is a matter of argument not its stalling. India adopted parliamentary democracy with necessary variations which makes it peculiar. It comes under attack from various corners of intelligentia, but while looking at it positively. The greatest arrangement in favour of parliamentary democracy in India is that notwithstanding a number of stresses and strains, it has worked for more than half a century.

*Sushma Yadav*

### BOOK REVIEW

**CONTROL OVER PUBLIC FINANCE IN INDIA, S.P. GANGULY, CONCEPT PUBLISHING COMPANY, NEW DELHI, 2006, PP. 158, RS.300/-**

Finance in itself is a much complex subject, more so for common man. Its understanding, however, is essential for one and all, be it an administrator or a housewife, courtesy its significance expanding from one's day-to-day life to national interest and even global causes. Kautilya had very rightly attached maximum importance to finance in state affairs. Therefore, it is always more than welcome when a book on the subject is brought about in Indian context through first hand sources like the author S.P. Ganguly, ex-chairman, Pay Commission, Mizoram, for it is able to impart better understanding of the nuances of the subject. Even a layman needs to be fully aware of the state's financial affairs because such knowledge is not only his right but also his duty so that he on his behalf is not negligent, indifferent, irresponsible and apathetic about the financial matters of the state. The book is meant not only for experts and academicians, but for all those who are interested in ensuring judicious utilization of public financial resources. It lays emphasis on the kind of control that the state exercises over all the agencies whom it has authorized to spend funds from public exchequer – people's hard earned money required to be invested for people's welfare and nation's progress.

The book has been divided into five chapters. The first chapter is introductory in nature and traces the historical background of financial administration in India. It tells how treasuries and sub-treasuries functioned as precursor to the present day banking system in India and also exhibits the complexity and enormity of this fiscal networking. It further gives a brief introduction of the types of control over public finance in India – the description despite being brief possesses clarity.

The second chapter briefly discusses the political, government and administrative

structure in the country in the constitutional perspective, both at the centre and state levels, in order to give a better understanding of the administration of public finance in the country, thereby explaining the network of power delegation expanding from political executive to the permanent executive, especially in context of financial administration. Besides, the organization and functions of Audit Department have also been described, and the office of Comptroller and Auditor General in India has been discussed in some detail thereby throwing light on its role in effective financial management. Through this chapter the author emphasizes that control over public finance is a "constitutional directive and democratic compulsion".

The third chapter brings about the Constitutional provisions related to Consolidated Fund, Public Account Committee, Contingency Fund, government borrowings and guarantees. It goes on to discuss how government transactions are classified and also the utility of such classification.

The fourth chapter deals with the main concept of the book, i.e. control over public finance. It has been divided into five parts discussing the different stages through which control is exercised over public finance in India beginning from preparation of budget, followed by parliamentary approval of the budget, implementation of the budget, auditing of the accounts and parliamentary scrutiny of public finance through various committees. Each stage has been discussed in much detail elaborating the role of all the agencies concerned. In that course, meaning of various technical terms has also been explained thus enabling a better understanding of the intricacies of public finance on part of readers.

The last chapter provides concluding remarks on the elaborate system of control of public finance that exists in the country. It not only analyzes the efficacy of this system, but also lays emphasis on the constructive role of the society in this direction. It further points out how human resource development can help minimize the failure of a system in any context, now be it public finance. The author draws attention towards various lapses and hindrances in the way of adequate management of public finance, and emphasizes over and over again on collective and committed efforts on the part of society as a whole to pin these problems down.

The author has wonderfully and successfully utilized his wide experience, deep insight and extensive study of the subject so as to enlighten the readers on this otherwise complicated subject. The entire theme has been exposed in a very lucid language. It is a slim yet comprehensive volume on the subject.

*Aditi Tyagi*

## BOOK REVIEW

**REGIONALISM AND ETHNICITY IN INDIAN POLITICS – DR. VISHWANATH MISHRA,  
VISHWA VIDHYALAYA PRAKSHAN, SAGAR, MADHYA PRADESH, (2006) PRICE 300/  
RS. PP 260**

'Regionalism and Ethnicity in Indian politics' by Dr. Vishwanath Mishra is an excellent and meaningful insight into origin, spread and scope of regionalism and ethnicity in Indian politics. The author has taken a paradigm shift in routine approach to the subject: He stressed on political economy and globalization apart from historical and traditional elements in addressing the phenomenon of regionalism and ethnicity. He took Gorkhaland, Bodoland and Jharkhand as specific examples upon which he built up his theory. He also elaborates on types of regionalism.

In case of Gorkhaland he addressed ethnicity and in case of Bodoland he stressed that subsequent division of state is not a solution of regionalism but in case of Jharkhand he elaborated both i.e. regionalism and ethnicity.

In this book author's major comments go for mechanism of reorganization of states based on these two phenomena. The author says demand for separate state is the most important and vocal demand based on regionalism in Indian politics though he conceals river water disputes and lingual debates also as key factors. It is observed how lingual debates ultimately turns into demand for separate state. In his own way the author talks how marginal people at the both ends of division of labor and specializations (high and low, which exists simultaneously) in absence of proper solution react through political awareness to harm state and society: he also highlights positive steps like Jamindari Unmulan, stopping of privy purse as contribution to assimilate to these marginal people of the centre and elaborates opportunities and flexible measures like development of Para military forces, dissolution to assemblies etc. which challenges government power to rule. The author says the country and society both exist as such they are not because of political power but because of elements of cultural unity of traditional society, self discipline and decision making.

The author elaborates on how British opportunism and failure of Indian National Congress resulted in demands for separate state. He quotes Jawaharlal Nehru's statement against lingualism, "First thing must come first and the First thing is security and stability of India."

The book under review has been divided into five chapters. First chapter discusses the conceptual and historical analysis of regionalism in Indian politics. The second chapter provides an analytical study on ethnicity based regionalism in Gorkhaland and Bodoland movement but Jharkhand is discussed in the next chapter. The fourth chapter is a ethnic

survey on Indian society and politics. The final chapter gives concluding observations about reorganization of states after the formation of Jharkhand by the author. The appendices provide relevant study material.

Dr. Vishwanath Mishra's present work is full of relevant information, analysis of historical events and academic observant approach.

*Ram Singh Arha*

### BOOK REVIEW

**Violence and Religion Cross Cultural Opinions and Consequences- R.E.S. Tanner,  
Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, 2007, pp.370, Price Rs. 750/-**

The book under review highlights various factors related to religious violence, its effects and prevention. Religious violence has been existent in different societies since centuries. The author underlines the difficulty of understanding religion and religious violence. The ideas and practices of Great Traditions- Lord Buddha, Jesus Christ, Prophet Mohammad, the sacred books of Judaism and Hinduism- dominate religious thinking, around these ideas and practices have grown up theological and philosophical thoughts and it is believed that followers of these faiths should model their lives according to these ideas recorded in writing which in turn frequently become a source of stress and violence. The author defines violence as something which covers both words and action causing both physical and psychological damage to people, property, animals and environment. The human background, theoretical issues and circumstantial factors in religious violence have been discussed. The author highlights three major sources of violent behavior which can influence the behavior of individuals- firstly, violence modeled and reinforced by family members, secondly, sub-culture and lastly, symbolic model for or against violence which are provided by mass-media. The book discusses all the inter-related issues of religious violence which merit closer attention- fear and anxiety within a particular religion, violence and fear between religions, secular violence and fear against religions, the destructiveness of religious violence and the religious violence and environment.

The author, then, focuses on prevention or mitigation of religious violence – the prevention of human lives and of non-human lives, property and the environment. The major religions have been actively against abortion. Infanticide is an ever-present danger for unwanted children- usually girl- and religion may be important in preserving their lives. Religious beliefs influence social behavior. The author examines different societies in context of religious violence. West based Christianity has been actively violent in the Balkans and reactively in Sudan and Nigeria. Buddhism has become nationally violent in Sri Lanka, and Hinduism against Muslims in India. Islam now dominates occurrences of violence con-

nected with religion with its numerous suicide bombings and anti-American terrorism.

The author finally concludes that religious violence has no identifiable and universal profile and there is no clear correlation between a specific religion and violence- except for Islam. But there are three paradigmatic levels that can be identified:-

1. Violence is no part of human genetic make-up and there is no violent activity which is sufficiently exact to be co-related to any social or religious activity.
2. Violence is nearer to the surface in societies whose dissatisfaction with modernity could be fitted into the ideas remaining of their medieval civilization with its spectacular buildings and specialized writing system.
3. The third paradigm of religious violence provides the immediate solutions for difficulties which may require public rather than private expression.

Overall there will always be the occasions of religious violence either definitely provoked by those whose interests are served by this and/or in reaction to secular events which are interpreted as antagonistic to a particular faith. Thus Tanner has made a great effort in trying to explain religious violence and its various aspects. The book will be valuable to those working in the field of social sciences

*Beena Rai*

## BOOK REVIEW

**Ethnic issues, Secularism and Conflict Resolution in North-East India by Bimal J.Deb(Ed.),Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi,2006, pp. 247.Price Rs.500.**

The chapters included in this book were presented in the seminar on Ethnic issues, secularism and conflict resolution in North-East India held on 25-26 April 2001 organized by North-East India council for Social Science Research, Shilong. The basic motivation of different ethnic groups for preserving their identities has been a dynamic force in the reorganization of North- East India. The ideology of ethnic separatism is worldwide phenomenon. In many parts of the world, the ethnic identities bypassed the overarching unifying forces of national unity. It resulted in inter-ethnic conflict and disintegration of some nation-states. The feeling of ethnic separation cannot be suppressed by military operation. The only alternative to this problem is political dialogue.

In Ethno-nationalism and self-determination Bimal J.Deb has tried to elaborate the fact that ethnic nationalism has taken deep roots in North-East India which has ignited the idea of self determination. He believes that the movement is not self-propelled because

intelligentsia and political elites play the vital role of educating and mobilizing the masses along the path of ethnic separateness. The advocates of ethno-nationalism harp on secessionist element of the right of self-determination which in their view is a fundamental human right.

J.B.Ganguly in "Ethnic issues, secularism and conflict resolution in North-East India" states that the ideology of ethnic separation is not a unique one in India because during later part of 20th century in many parts of the world ethnic identities bypassed the overarching unifying bonds of the ideology of nationalism resulting in inter-ethnic clashes and disintegration of some nation-states. The cult of ethnic separatism is further boosted by the trend of dilution of secular values and growing signs of religious intolerance which must be effectively contained. He admits that instead of trying to resolve ethnic insurgencies by military means more emphasis should be laid on political dialogue by the government with the insurgent groups.

P.C.Biswas in "Growing challenge to the concept of secularism and its special impact on North-East region" has tried to define secularism. In his article he tried to say that false cry is made by the Hindus that they are in danger. Fanatic Hindus raise this slogan with a view to hide the interest of upper class exploiters and try to divert the attention of simple minded Hindu masses against an imagined enemy, mainly the Muslims. He believes that India is the homeland of multi-lingual, multi-religious and multi-national communities and no community living here is alien and nobody can claim to be purely of Aryan race.

B.R.Rizvi in "Ethnicity and Ethnic Movement in North-East India" has tried to explain the meaning of ethnic group and how ethnic boundaries are maintained in multi-ethnic states. N.N Bhattacharjya in "Ethnic cultural diversity of north-east India" has tried to show how ethnic cultural diversity and divisiveness of the region can be calculated by using an index of ethnic differentiation.

Ramesh Chandra in his article "Ethnic issues and secularism" has tried to work out the root causes of ethnic conflict. He believes that secularism as an ideology can be used in ethnic conflict resolution. He believes that through dialectical approach a congenial atmosphere of dialogue can be created through which interest of different communities can be resolved.

Gorky Chakraborty in "Secular thought and communal practices in India and its North-East" has tried to work out the genesis of secular thought in India along with the features of Indian secularism in practice. He believes that the Indian model of secularism neither could keep aside religion nor could blend the secular and sacred values together. Thus it has become rootless and directionless in its content.

Amalesh Banarjee in his article "Equality, Fraternity and Development" has tried to work out the reasons of ethnic conflict and how can these conflicts be resolved, he believes that ethnic conflicts arise out of socio-economic conditions within political economic structure of the country. If land, labor, capital, culture and religion are the major source of conflicts among the human race then liberty, equality, fraternity and economic development are the effective means for resolving the conflict.

R.N Prasad in his paper "Secularism in India: Problem and Perspective" had tried to explain the concept of secularism. He also tried to distinguish between adherence to religion and communalism. He opines that communalism as a political strategy is opposed to nationalism and secularism.

Susmita Priyadarshini in her article "Ethnicity, Ethnic conflict and conflict resolution in North-East India" has tried to find out the reasons of Naga-Kuki conflict and Bodo-non-Bodo conflict. The issue of Ethnicity and Ethnic identity in Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Assam is taken up by Mahadev Chakravarti, R.P Bhattacharjee, Sukhendu Mazumdar and Lopita Nath respectively.

Last eight to nine articles in this book deal at large with the issue of ethnic conflict in Assam. Dhruba Pratim Sharma talks about the ideological aspect of Bodo separatism in Assam. Vashyati Bhuyan elaborate movements of lesser known ethnic groups of Assam such as Ahom movement, Karbi-Dimsa Autonomy movement. Lipi Ghosh in her article tried to analyze the role of Ahoms in Assam and to what extend they have been able to develop and propagate the idea of secularism in Assam. Premlata Devi in her article tried to locate the factors which sparked off the multifaceted problem of Bodos and which ultimately led to the Bodoland movement. Minakshi Chakraborty in her article tried to give an overview of the Dimsa society. The Dimsas, popularly known as the hill kacharis are the dominant tribe in North Chachar Hills.

Momita Goswami and Lakhahira Dutta through empirical data tried to show the spatial distribution and socio-economic well being of scheduled tribe population in Assam. This book gives us a real insight about the ethnic problems of North-East India. Since it is a collection of articles presented in a conference, all articles are very well drafted and worth reading. If we go about according to the suggestions made by some of the scholars in this book then we can certainly found out ways and means to resolve the ethnic conflict of North-East and that too within the framework of secularism.

*Triranjan Raj*

**BOOK REVIEW**

NUCLEAR WEAPON FREE ZONE, P. Moorthy, Concept Publishing Company,  
New Delhi 2006, PP 260 Price Rs. 500/-

Nuclearization in world politics has posed the most formidable challenge before the existence of humanity. The debate on utilization of nuclear power for both constructive and destructive purpose began with the advent of nuclear weapons itself. It has been the irony of world politic & that nuclearization began when the post war international relations started unfolding in a surcharged atmosphere of cold war consequently when the United States exploded the first nuclear bomb Trinity at Alamogordo, New Mexico. The Soviet response came in the shape of detonation on 29 August 1949, Other great powers like Britain, France and China too joined the race leading to the stockpile of 27000 nuclear weapons till the date. The nuclear haves were very much aware of the catastrophic nature of those weapons of Mass destruction so multilateral initiatives also started with a view to prevent the bilateral use of nuclear weapons. The idea of nuclear weapon free zone (NWFZ) emerged in order to ensure the security of states in a particular zone, world security; non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, as well as regional arms control. How to ascertain mutual assured survival (Mass) in the wake of weapons of mass destruction and how to replace the concept of deterrence has been a perennial concern in international politics in the post second world war period.

It is against this backdrop P. Moorthy has tried to examine the concept of nuclear weapon free zone. He gives a detailed historical account of the initiative of NWFZ. Starting with the first multilateral treaty on 1 Dec. 1959 named Antarctica treaty the author analyses the efforts for establishing NWFZ in Central Europe, Northern Europe, the Balkans, Africa, Mediterranean, India, South Asia and the Middle East. The Antarctic treaty signed by twelve countries Argentina Belgium, Chile, France, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, The United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, the union of the Soviets Socialist republic and the United States of America, does not rule out the nuclear test for peaceful purposes. However Antarctic's and its surrounding maritime areas have been free from militarization. But Third world countries are very much critical of this treaty as they want Antarctica to be declared as common heritage of mankind. Similarly there is contradictory opinion among the states regarding the outer space treaty.

Tlatoco treaty was the first multilateral treat, signed with the sole aim of establishing nuclear weapon free zone in Latin America 26 American countries have signed the treaty but the treaty is not clear about of application. Besides it, U.S. has not ratified the protocol of the treaty. After Latin America, Australia took initiative towards certainty a NWFZ in the South Pacific as a result Rarotonga treaty came in to existence on 6 August 1985. Nevertheless obligation of the contracting parties provided by those five articles of the treaty does not

prohibit all nuclear activities. Even the U.S. is not prepared to dismantle its nuclear infrastructure in the Pacific.

The irony with the nuclear weapon free zone treaty is that big powers particularly the U.S.A. never gave a fair deal to the idea of NWFZ. INF treat was signed by the U.S. and the Soviet Union in 1987 with a view to destroy all their land based medium range nuclear missile ranging from 500 to 5000 Km. However it is yet to be realized in practice.

Dr. P. Moorthy has examined the various initiatives pertaining to nuclear weapon free zone in a critical manner. Divided into six chapters the book under review gives a detailed description of nuclear weapon free zone and the politics involved in it. Appendices and exhaustive list of books and articles consulted by the author in courser of preparation to their volume reflect his meticulous academic plans to bring about are authentic book on the subject. The author has quite ably performed this task by producing this book on nuclear weapon free zone. It is indeed a remarkable addition in the literature pertaining to nuclearization in world politics.

*Naresh Kumar*

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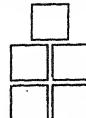
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(A Window to Understanding Village Republics of India)

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# I THE INDIAN JOURNAL OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

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*Editor :*  
*Sanjeev Kumar Sharma*

THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF  
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Dear Friends,  
Greetings from Meerut.

Wish you a very happy and prosperous New Year. Thanks for again electing me the Editor of the Indian Journal of Political Science at 53rd All India Conference of Indian Political Science Association at University of Rajasthan, Jaipur on 27-29 Dec. 2006 I am happy that my request to increase the subscription rates of IJPS was considered by the Executive and the General Body of the Association authorized me to decide the issue. I have regularly been pleading that the present subscription structure is inappropriate and financially problematic to the regularity and periodicity of the journal. Therefore, keeping in view the printing cost and postage charges, the subscription rates are hereby being revised w.e.f. 01-01-2007 as follows :-

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With best regards  
Yours Sincerely  
  
Sanjeev K. Sharma

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### **Editorial Note**

Dear Friends,

The concepts, ideologies and terminologies associated with the understanding of Indian polity in perspective of analyzing the largest democracy of modern world have, to a great extent, been shaped, determined and disseminated by either the scholars of western universities, (though some of them have essential Indian affiliations) or by Indian scholars having been mainly graduated in Western models and constructs and to a large extent the mental environment and set-up also. We have, that way, been fortunate enough to have some exceedingly brilliant expositions on different political movements and institutions with finest analysis and emphatic comprehension of the intricacies of Indian polity brought out by these intellectual leaders. There are good number of research papers, books and scholarly works presented by the collaborative efforts of western and Indian analysts. In addition to that, system analysts have also produced well documented descriptions of the events and developments of the polity both at macro and micro level. Whatsoever are the academic limits and boundaries of these research pursuits, the usefulness and relevance of them remains above average keeping in view their utility in increasing the understanding of different political and social institution of this 'oldest' and largest democracy of the world. Though some of my friends may vehemently argue that the ideological inclinations of most of these outstanding works have to be essentially contested because of their one-sidedness and the overwhelming 'left-liberal' approach and admittedly, to a significantly great extent the argument appears to be solid and valid and to the utter dismay of sound objective discourse lovers the point is never well taken by our intellectual giants, yet we must acknowledge the efforts and appreciate the amount of work produced which necessarily contains sufficient merit extraordinary labour. The critics of these research outputs are, unfortunately, very less in number and their whole exercise is limited only to make their observations either through some news media articles, comments or scholarly presentations in seminars. Their inability to produce their point of view in a systematic manner through well prepared and perfectly drafted research papers is great cause of concern for all the people craving for sound and sincere debate on various issues of academic importance.

The events and developments shaping the contours of Indian polity may sometimes essentially lead to overwhelming confusion and mis-understanding about the political parties, ideologies, manifestos, leadership and programmes thereof. The behaviour pattern of our political leaders is unfortunately not attaching the respect of the common masses. Their large scale involvement in corrupt practices while remaining in public offices has immensely affected the public faith in political institutions and administrative setups. The leadership of our political parties is being characterized primarily by self-promoting political actors concentrating mainly on the expansion of their vote banks so as to ensure electoral gains.

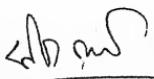
They are busy in making financial growth out of the positions occupied by them and thereby thwarting the process of democratization. The public anger is most of the time reflected in small upsurges against the administrative machinery and the one-sided victories and defeats of different political groups in parliamentary and legislative assembly elections. The ideological orientations have completely been relegated to the back-burner and the considerations of castes and sub-caste group with the exterior decoration of 'social engineering' have emerged out of the attraction of subsequent success at the polls. The organizational structures of most of the political parties in our country have collapsed and the apparent hierarchy is comprised of either the family members or psychofants. Therefore, the debate and discourse as well as the elements of internal democracy are completely missing. The programmes of our political parties are generally based on adhock issues and contingent planning.

The contemporary nature of the working of our political parties has not been promoting any recruitment with proper socialization. Therefore, the bondage of ideology has also not remained any kind of cementing force for the upcoming leadership. Their objectives of their entry into the main stream politics have also been shaped by the allurement of material achievements of money and positions. This has led to the almost lack of any wide spread cadre and the dedicated workforce capable of social mobilization and becoming opinion leaders to the masses, which has resulted in directionless political movements, upwardship of leaders with no mass base to the higher positions in the organizations, dearth of sustainability of the issues, complete withdrawal of ideological commitments from the common programmes only because of power combinations, and the loss of faith of the general masses in the whole political system. The imminent natural corollary of this has been the gradual apathy of the citizens in the political processes which is a serious threat to the democratic governance. This is our main concern as students of political science and public administration. Therefore, sincere efforts are required to it make possible that our important political institutions gain requisite respect and become properly democratized institutions of public governance through political recruitment and socialization, interest aggregation, interest articulation and political communication. For this we all have to perform our duties in such a manner that our social obligations are not in any case hampered by our academic pursuits. Therefore, the shastra says:

यद्याचरति श्रेष्ठः ततदूर्वेत्तरो जनः, सः यद्यमाणम् कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवरतिः ।

12 October 2007

Meerut

  
(Sanjeev Kumar Sharma)

## DECENTRALISATION FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE AND SERVICE DELIVERY IN INDIA : THEORY AND PRACTICE

Satyanarayana Sangita

*Democratic decentralisation tends strongly to enhance speed, quantity and quality of responses from government institutions. But in some countries, it even likely to result in increased costs, lessened efficiency and probably greater inequality. From this perspective the paper examines the implications of the decentralisation on quality of governance and service delivery in theory and practice in India. These issues have been analyzed through conceptual and analytical framework. For this purpose, the study has been conducted on local governance in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.*

Decentralised governance has occupied a very prominent place in nation building and developmental strategies of developing countries in recent years. It is sometimes viewed as either a panacea or plague. Some argued for it on the grounds that it promotes efficiency, effectiveness and equity in delivery of services. According to them, it facilitates people's participation, preferences and helps to mobilise both human and financial resources as well as contains corruption and ensures accountability (Richard Berd et.al. 1999, Rondeneli, 1999, UNDP 1998, World Bank 1999, Pranab Bardhan 1996, Crooks and James Manor 1998, Shamsel Haque, 1999). Democratic decentralisation tends strongly to enhance speed, quantity and quality of responses from government institutions (Manor, 1999). Local governments have both authority and resources to respond quickly to problems and pressures from below without waiting for approval at higher levels. On the other hand, others argued that these virtues are unlikely to be achieved in the context of countries in which citizen preferences are unlikely translated into budget outcomes and the institutional capacity of existing sub-national agencies is close to nil. From this perspective decentralisation seems likely to result in increased costs, lessened efficiency in service delivery and probably greater inequality (Rodrigues, 1999: 299).

Keeping this perspective in view, the paper examines the implications of the decentralization on quality of governance and service delivery in theory and practice in India. These issues are analysed with the help of a conceptual and analytical framework. The study is mainly based on secondary sources and personal observations of the local governance in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The second section deals with the conceptual and analytical framework. Autonomy capacity and accountability of PRIs are discussed in the third section. Fourth section deals with the outcomes and service delivery. In the fifth section, the role of state and civil society (social capital) in facilitating autonomy, empowerment and accountability of decentralised governance institutions for improving the quality of governance and service delivery are discussed.

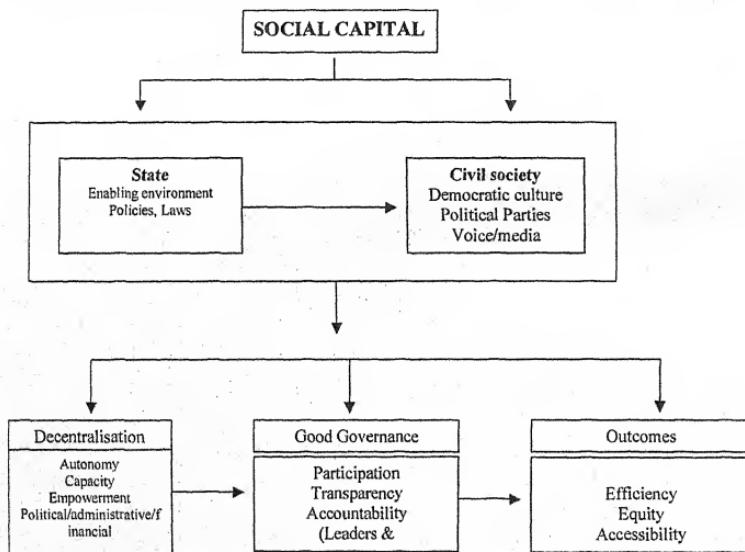
### II

#### Analytical framework

Devolution of powers, responsibilities and resources to local government promotes good

governance and better service delivery. Devolution of powers deepens democracy and enhances the legitimacy of political system for promoting peace and prosperity in a plural society like India. Devolution also promotes legitimacy, transparency and accountability of the local government and security and participation of the people in local decision making (CIDA, 1998; World Bank, 2001: cited in Romeo, Leonardo G, 2003:90). It generates incentives for people to own the local government, since newly assigned responsibilities and resources are relevant to them (Litwack et al; 1998). It promotes representative and responsive grass root level leadership. It also generates allocative and productive efficiency and accelerated better service delivery as shown in the chart.

**Chart : Analytical Framework For Decentralised Governance & Service Delivery**



Allocative efficiency is high in decentralised governance rather than the higher level government. Local information and needs can be ascertained by local governments more accurately and thereby identify project or location of the project which has maximum utility or welfare gain. This is more so where needs are more diversified. For instance, some villages need water facility rather than roads. In such situation the utilisation of the former is more than the latter provided by the central government. Many centrally sponsored rural development programmes in the past failed due to wrong priorities, design and location. Roads, school building, tanks, field channels built were not effectively used as they were not strategically

located to the needs of people. Similarly, many hand pumps were out of order, since people never had the feeling of owning them.

Productive efficiency is also high in decentralised governance. Firstly, people's involvement in formulation and implementation results in reduction in transactional cost. People's monitoring has greatly contributed to minimise wastages and leakages. Their close observation prevented the procurement of substandard inputs like goods and materials. Close monitoring helped improve the attendance of teachers and doctors in schools and hospitals respectively. Secondly, it helps to mobilise additional resources (voluntary contribution like land, capital and labour) for promoting rural development. Such contributions accounted for 20 to 40 per cent of the expenditure of the community development blocks in 1950. Many villagers donated lands for construction of schools and hospitals. Even instances such as repair of field canals and tanks, and construction of buildings and roads were evident. Even people's involvement has also helped to manage village common property resources. Thirdly people's involvement is also resulted in improvement in collection of levies, betterment and user charges. One-third of the contribution has come from the villagers to construct rural roads in Andhra Pradesh under the World Bank funds in recent years. Fourthly, selection/location of members is very effective, whenever they are selected through the grama sabha meetings. The involvement of grama sabha has brought down the selection of wrong places and persons.

Decentralised governance enables the poor to articulate policies very effectively. PRIs role in effectively implementing land reforms and emergency relief programmes in West Bengal has been well documented by many studies (Prabhat Kumar Datta, 1996; M.N.Roy, 1995). The programme of recording names of share croppers, particularly known as Operation Barga (OB) programme was formerly undertaken by the administrators. This task was given to PRIs, when they came into existence in 1978. Village and block panchayat played a very significant role for its success in recording of share-croppers' identification of vested land and distribution for poor.

Devolution of powers can be translated into good governance outcomes, if it is supported by the development of local government capacity. The local government capacity can be understood at three levels viz.; individual, the institutional and systemic (UNDP, 1998). The individual level capacity includes the abilities, values, attitudes of elected representatives and administrators in local government. The institutional linkages include structures, procedures and operating rules of local government in establishing vertical and horizontal linkages within and outside the government departments for effective coordination for formulation, implementation and monitoring of policies and programmes. The systematic level includes policy and legal framework within which the local government operates, and the rules and practices with which it interacts with other actors (Romeo, Leonardo G, 2003)

Both autonomy and capacity of local government ultimately depend upon the participative and accountability mechanisms of the local government. Three types of accountability mechanisms are existing to ensure accountability. They are hierarchical, internal and external accountability. Hierarchical accountability control mechanisms include: inspections by higher level body, approval of local government decisions and budgets, deployment of central level personnel to local governments, use of powers of suspension and dissolution of local body. Internal mechanisms include: code of conduct, budgetary and personnel control, internal audit mechanisms and disciplinary, supervisory arrangements.

The external mechanisms include periodical elections, recall, referendum, report cards surveys, and ombudsman and so on. Elections are vital to ensure people's participation, provision of information and accountability. Periodical elections provide opportunity for people to assess the performance of the leaders for election. Oversight of the elected representative over the budgets, audit reports and performance ensures the accountability. Budgets are to be prepared (to raise and spend) and obtain approval from the general body/ legislatures. Administrators are to be adhered to the set procedures for raising and spending money, inviting tenders, awarding contracts and procuring material. The auditors report exposing the weakness of financial management (nature and extent of loss of public money and stock, misappropriation, unauthorised expenditure. Violation of prescribed rules and procedures, fraud or theft, embezzlement and incorrect book keeping) to be placed before the general body (Sharma: 1997: 60). The legislative committee headed by the leader of the opposition presents the misappropriation and irregularities on the basis of audit report to legislative body on the lines of parliamentary committee. It also suggests various measures to rectify the weaknesses.

Similarly, many mechanisms are existing to contain corruption and injustices to the citizens arising out of mal-administration. Anti-corruption institutions like Lokayukta, Anti-corruption Bureau, Vigilance Commission investigate charges against public officials on the basis of complaints and recommend action including suspension for erring officials. Similarly, the judiciary and media also play a significant role in ensuring accountability.

Devolution of powers to sub national levels will not automatically result into outcomes unless state and civil society commit for decentralisation. The state commitment to democratic decentralisation should translate into four conventional types of measures /actions: (a) enabling, (b) financing, (c) supporting and (d) supervising. While the first two refer to creating the legal framework and securing the resources for the local authorities to operate, the second two refer to local institutional strengthening and related performance monitoring and legality controls. The state should also accept responsibility for supervising local authorities in ways that go beyond the traditional administrative (legality) controls and financial auditing. Supervision must be extended to the specific monitoring of the performance of local authorities in the adoption and

implementation of participatory planning, and it must cover both process and outcomes of such implementation. Performance monitoring would then enable a system of incentives and penalties to be established to support the adoption of local-level participatory planning.

In the final analysis, the accountability of both national and local governments depends on the people's capacity to articulate the exercise of power, which requires the existence of a vibrant civil society and a strong democratic political culture. In general, civil society provides public space to facilitate rational and critical discourse which is essential to form critical public opinion regarding state policies and institutions, create organisations and associational bonds among citizens, enhance people's power to challenge the hegemony of central and local administration and thus, make cultural and local authorities publicly accountable (Haque, 1997).

### III

#### **Autonomy (Political, Administrative and Financial)**

PRIs in Karnataka are emerging as units of local self-government just like Kerala and West Bengal for promoting the development. PRIs enjoy political, administrative and financial autonomy in many respects, although it is far behind from the earlier system. Firstly, the State Government in order to improve the functioning of PRIs has constituted from time to time many expert committees to associate with various finance committees. They include Krishnaswamy, 1987, P R Nayak 1987, R M Honnavar 1989, G Thimmaiah 1996 and N Viswanathan, 2002. Secondly, Karnataka and Sikkim were the first states to transfer all major responsibilities along with resources (central and state plan schemes and other resources) to PRIs (Mahi Pal, 2000). Many centrally sponsored programmes have been transferred to PRIs, which hitherto was not done by many States. All 29 functions as mentioned in schedule and resources are transferred to PRIs (assign 30 specific subjects to VPS, 28 to TPs and 28 ZPs). PRIs can prepare plans for subjects like agriculture, animal husbandry, primary and secondary education, public health, rural roads and housing, women and children, social welfare, public distribution, public libraries and so on. GPs can undertake regulatory functions such as issues of licence, approval of building plans, and maintenance of common properties, assets and buildings. They can provide basic services such as drinking water and sanitation and maintain village roads, buildings and streetlights.

Thirdly, the elected head of the ZP is given the status of a minister and entrusted with the executive powers. The chief executive officer who controls the district level departments works under the overall supervision of the elected ZP President. Fourthly, many initiatives have been taken to minimise the interference of the State Government in PRIs, particularly in holding of elections. Powers such as demarcation of constituencies and reservation of seats are transferred to SEC from the DC. This was very essential to conduct free and fair elections and enjoy the trust of all political parties. In fact, there were allegations against the ruling party for demarcating

constituencies and reserving seats to the advantage of the ruling party.

Fifthly, financial resources accounting 30-35 per cent of State's resources are transferred to the PRIs on the basis of SFC recommendations. For instance, the Government had released 33.61 per cent (2,691 crores) to PRIs and 3.61 per cent (about Rs 290 crores) to urban bodies in 2002. In fact, it was slightly higher in the earlier system (37.22 per cent in 1987-88 and also higher than the FCs recommendation (Sivanna, 2002). The State grant to GPs for maintenance has been increased over the years. The average state grant to GP has increased from Rs.1 lakh to Rs.2 lakh in 1999 and again to Rs.3.5 lakh in 2001. The income of GP has gone up to Rs.6.00 lakh and further more to Rs.7.50 lakh as the State Government has announced an additional grant of Rs.1.5 lakh, while presenting the 2003-04 Budget (Karnataka 2003; Babu, 2004). The GPs are given powers to levy tax on property, water, vehicles, entertainment, advertisement and so on. Even they can collect fees from markets, cattle grounds, and bus stands. Both VP and TP get proceeds from cess on land revenue. GP can also acquire, hold and dispose off property, both movable and immovable. However ZP and TP have no such powers.

In spite of these provisions, PRIs in Karnataka are not fully autonomous. Firstly, the constitution of parallel bodies outside the PRIs' purview undermines the autonomy of PRIs. Village level committees such as educational committees, Village Forest Committees (VFCs), Water Users Association can be mentioned in this regard. Even development activities undertaken under Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS), MLA funds and regional boards such as Hyderabad Development Board (HDB), and Malnad Development Board (MDB) etc., also undermine the importance of PRIs. In addition, the association of MLAs, MLCs, and MPs with PRIs through voting rights also undermine the autonomy of the PRIs.

Secondly, the elected heads have no control over the administrative heads, although the heads of ZP and TP are designated as executive heads. State minister status enjoyed under the earlier Act has not been restored to the ZP president, in spite of expert committees' recommendation. Even the staff is not under the control of the PRIs. The elected leaders have no power to take action against the erring officials, although ZP president in earlier system initiated confidential reports of CEO (chief secretary). In fact, PR Nayak committee has suggested for transfer of group C and D staff to PRIs. Besides this, the administrators have been given overriding powers over PRIs to prevent wrongdoings. CEO can withhold the resolutions passed by the ZP, if it violates the rules. However, the supervisory control of the GPs has been removed from the administrative control of the Assistant Commissioner through the recent amendments. The VP president has no financial powers, although ZP and TP presidents are given such powers.

Thirdly, the PRIs are also not considered to be financially fully autonomous. They completely depend upon Central and State Government grants. For instance, they constitute around 77 per cent of the total revenues of GPs. While GPs own tax and non-tax revenue

constitute 20 per cent and 3 per cent respectively (Babu, 2002), the average internal resource mobilisation per capita ranges from Rs. 7.66 to 15.20 in Karnataka. Added to this, most of these funds are tied-up grants on which GPs have little freedom to spend according to the local needs. For instance, 57.77 per cent of GP income and expenditure is under JRY funds provided by the Central Government. In some GPs, it constitutes around 80 per cent (Sivanna 2002). Besides, ZP and TP have no taxation powers (except the 3 per cent surcharge on stamp duty for TP). They entirely depend upon State and Central grants (Babu 1999).

### Capacity (Political, Administrative and Financial) of the PRIs

Autonomy is meaningful, if the PRIs have the required capacity (political, administrative technical and financial) to translate powers into concrete action. This ultimately depends upon the distribution of activities among the three tiers and their effective horizontal and vertical linkages, and the capacity of officials and non-officials manning these institutions. Karnataka has taken major initiative in this regard. A detailed activity mapping is presented in the Box 6. There is no clear division of responsibility among the tiers in overlapping functional areas.

#### Box 1: Activity Mappings: a Step forward for PRIs

Karnataka Government has a progressive record for strengthening PRIs. State government has come out with activity mapping wherein specific responsibilities were identified at three levels. A particular job/responsibility has been given to a particular level. The essence is that what is appropriate at a given level of PRIs, should be done at that level and not simply at upper level. Hence, the overlapping can be avoided. Important tasks have been identified for every level so that services can be made effective. Plan formulation, implementation, budgeting, evaluation and monitoring responsibilities are distributed among them according their competent and reliability.

For instance, the responsibility of enrolment of school age children, maintaining school building and play grounds, exercise vigilance on regular attendance of teachers and students and report to the concerned, assessment for drop out position and initiate appropriate measures to reduce are given to GP; ZP is made responsible for assessing the requirements of schools, teachers, equipment in the district and plan for them; and monitoring the functioning of primary and upper primary schools are vested to taluka level. Similarly, identification of schemes and locations for water supply, maintaining water supply schemes rest entirely with GP. ZP is entrusted with the responsibility of formulation of major water supply schemes, approval of schemes proposed by TPs and GPs, establishing water testing laboratories and award contracts for the execution of major schemes coming out side the TP and GP plans. With regard to health care, the ZP is responsible to provide physical infrastructure, co-ordination of communicable diseases programmes, school health programmes, IEC campaigns and planning of rural sanitation programmes. The specific activities identified for the GP include chlorinating of village tanks and wells, spraying of DDT, construction of sanitary latrines, cleaning of roads and drainage, formation of village health committees, and mobilisation of people for family planning and immunisation camps. GPs are also responsible for supervision of the activities of ANMs and anganawadi workers. They are supposed to report the outbreak of epidemics and helping emergency medical relief services.

### Participation and Empowerment

The PRIs are made accessible to the people including the disadvantaged groups to participate in the governance and improve their livelihood systems. Firstly, the establishment of small PRI structures/units nearing the people (6,000 and 400 population for GP and ward respectively) motivates them to participate in the election of good leaders and selection of relevant policies. High turnout in PR election reflects this trend. For instance, the voter turnout was 68.6 per cent in ZP and TP elections in 1995 and 53.5 per cent in 1993 GP elections (Satish Chandran, 2000:140). This percentage is always higher than the State and National Elections (40-55 per cent), notwithstanding the GPs' low percentage due to the non-partisan elections (absence of political parties in the GPs elections). Secondly, the small units enabled people to assess the performance of the leaders very closely and thereby selection of good leaders, if the elections are held free and fair. The defeat of highest number of non -performing leaders in GP elections reflects this trend. For instance, 30 to 40 per cent members are elected in 1999 GP elections. A large per cent of them got elected for the first time. This is true, wherever, the elections are conducted free and fair and the influence of elite is less due to strict watch of the civil society and vigilance of the political parties. Elite capture (leaders with the money, communal and muscle power) is very common in the absence of such forces. Unanimous election of 30 per cent of the total membership of 80,627 in 1993 GP elections reflects this trend. Similarly, 27.7 per cent got elected unopposed in the recent elections. The local elites and community elders and influential leaders chose most of them.

Thirdly, the constitution of Gram Sabha and Ward Committees' meetings provide information about the intended activity to the people to select relevant schemes. These meetings also help people to select the beneficiaries and localities on the basis of merit and thereby prevent the non-poor and undeserved from availing the benefits. These meetings also help the citizen to assess the extent of fulfillment of the promises and commitments made in the earlier meetings. Such monitoring also minimises corruption, since expenditure is placed before the meetings. These mechanisms helped to ensure the accountability.

Fourthly, reservation of seats and capacity building through the training and competitive political parties and active civil society has empowered the disadvantaged groups (women, SC/STs and OBCs). Reservation of seats and positions in PRIs for women and backward castes in Karnataka enabled these groups to be present in PRIs in big number. Women accounted for 46.7 (37, 689) per cent in gram panchayats in 1999. It was 40.2 (1, 343) and 36.45 (335) per cent respectively at the TP and ZP levels respectively. It is the case with other disadvantaged groups. SC/STs constituted around 32.20 per cent in GPs and 23.67 and 23.06 per cent in TPs and ZPs respectively in 1999. The corresponding figure for OBC was 33.24, 33.32, and 33.30 respectively (Sivanna, 2002). This representation has helped the disadvantaged to articulate

their views in governing councils for improving their livelihoods and their awareness is very high due to the presence of political parties and civil society.

Studies pointed out that reservation has improved the awareness and perception levels of women and it has created an urge in them to participate in the governance. Twenty five per cent of the women members found visible change in their status within the family after they have been elected. About 60 per cent of women said that they would encourage women to contest election. The same per cent is contemplating to contest election (PRIA, 2000). In an all women GP of Mydolalu in Karnataka it was found that the women were performing better than men in promoting all round development. Interestingly, all women in this GP got elected for the first time and had no previous experience (Bhargava and Subha 1999).

However, some studies did not agree with this view. They pointed out that their articulation capacity is very weak and played no effective role in council meetings and remained silent or participated as directed by others (Blair 2000). Scholars attributed the following reasons for their ineffective articulation. Firstly, women are elected as proxies for male family members or elites. This de facto politics negatively affected women's political participation and also the scope of addressing gender interest (Vijayalakshmi, 2002). This is more so in the case of tribal women. The wide disparities in social and economic conditions of STs and their marginal position in the development process are major constraints in their participation in the governance (Vijayalakshmi, 2001). Thirdly, gender and other social differences hindered in exercising their power effectively as political representatives. Many women did not perceive their position as a personal achievement; it was rather seen as involving their husbands, patrons and other prominent men. They owe their position to political contacts and economic position of their male family members. Fourthly, women representatives were seen less favourable in terms of knowledge, political skills, ability to learn and in their orientation to activities of the public sphere (Vijayalakshmi, 2003).

#### **Transparency, Accountability and Corruption**

Studies unravelled that the decentralised governance ensures greater accountability and transparency in delivery of the services at the grassroots level (Aziz 1994). The experience of panchayat election shows that election became a powerful mechanism for accountability even though intimidation and vote buying are the hallmarks of election scenario in India. This is because if the elected leaders do not work devotedly for the upliftment of rural society, they will not be able to win the election next time (Blair 2000). The defeat of large percent of sitting members in PR elections as discussed earlier reflects this trend. Studies even mentioned that the accountability of officials to the elected representatives has increased. Responsible officials (like PHC medical officer, agricultural and veterinary officer etc.) can be asked for their presence in the PRIs meetings. In the meeting an officer may be asked/questioned for his/her performance.

Some studies did not agree with this view that the accountability is one of the weakest aspects of the panchayat system. The ineffective accountability and non-responsiveness of elected representative is a major problem in delivering quality services. For instance, panchayat representatives have not been responsive to their constituents and have not acted in their interests (Inbanathan 2002). The following reasons are attributed for non-responsiveness. Firstly, PRIs have no recall mechanism to ensure greater accountability. The elected members have no regular and frequent communication with their voters. Voters have very rare chance to ask questions if their members are not functioning according to their desires. Secondly, the ethical values of leaders are very low. Many leaders perceive that the official positions in PRIs bring prosperity. Attitude of gaining benefits from their tenure as panchayat members is not seen as a morally abhorrent activity, but as perfectly acceptable convention. Thirdly, the elected representatives considered that they are answerable to their sponsors/local elites and not to the local people/electorate. It was the husbands who took the panchayat-related decisions, but the women were apparently accountable. This is because that a large per cent of members were elected through the intervention and support of the local leaders or village elites (Inbanathan 2002).

Many initiatives have been taken to ensure accountability of leaders to people and reducing the corruption. Holding of Gram Sabha (GS) meetings has been made mandatory. Ward Sabha for 400 population was constituted in 2003 to ensure effective control over the officials. Social audit (Jamatbandhi) has been introduced to monitor the progress of various works executed. In a study, it was found that the social auditing was made by the administrators particularly GP secretaries who are responsive and accountable to the citizen with respect to their scheduled tasks and responsibilities (Sivanna and Babu, 2004). It has ultimately resulted in responding to the demands of stakeholders and ensuring effective delivery of services.

However, some studies found that the GS meetings were not held regularly. The attendance in these meetings was thin and declined over the years. Moreover, meetings were mechanical without any seriousness. GS meetings have been reduced to a meaningless ritual primarily aimed at rubber-stamping decisions about work undertaken. Thus, many meetings were conducted on paper and signatures were obtained subsequently without full consultation with the gram sabha (Aiyar 2004). In many villages, members do not feel enthusiastic for holding meeting, because of the fear of harassment from citizens (Aziz et al 2000).

#### **Corruption and Transparency**

Though scholars have raised the issue that the PRIs have increased the corruption, and there is no proper evidence about it, the present study finds that decentralised governance enhances greater transparency and reduces the incidence of grand corruption at the grassroots

level (Aziz 1994). Another study found that corruption among PRIs functionaries was minimal where media, and civil society were effective. The rent seeking is more in areas where institutions like grama sabha, media and civil society organisations are non-functional (Inbanathan, 2001). However, some studies found that the representatives are using their positions for personal gains rather than the public interest. A significant proportion of the representatives could be accused of shirking their responsibilities, and they were also found guilty of corrupt practices.

In order to ensure the accountability and reduce the corruption in PRIs, the Working Group on Decentralisation has suggested that an Ombudsman institution at the State/district level should be constituted. It can conduct investigation and enquiries regarding allegations and about the wrongdoings. The group suggested that the easy accessibility of information to the public through publication and display of information should be provided. It has also underlined the importance of the Citizens Charter for PRIs specifying the services, categories, standards, periodicity and time limit and so on.

### Decentralization and Outcomes

It is found that capacity building of PRIs functionaries is much in an advantageous position. Representatives have taken many innovative measures in mobilising local resources for delivering the effective services. As it can be seen from Boxes 2 and 3 that the activities of Belendor and Kinnigoli GPs are successful in mobilising the resources and promoting the development in their areas.

#### Box 2 : Experience of Belandur Gram Panchayat in Bangalore District

The Belandur Gram Panchayat has underground drainage system and garbage collection facilities. The villagers don't have water problem. There is no distributional discrimination between the rich and the poor. The panchayat ensures equal quantity of water to every household. It has provided mini water schemes with 5 overhead tanks to every ward. The member residing in ward takes the responsibility for maintenance of water supply facilities. Besides this, there are 5 employees who have been employed by the GP for maintenance of drinking water supply. GP has made bye-law for fair delivery of water to all households. A penalty of Rs. 2000 can be levied for illegal water connection or the regular connection may be disconnected for a period of six months. About Rs. 25 lakh has been spent for the construction of drainage system. Toilets are being constructed for all the households, including those living below the poverty line. There is no evidence of open defecation in the panchayat area. In 2001-02, about 365 toilets were constructed in this panchayat under different schemes. GP took a mandatory decision that it will construct more than 40 latrines in a year. Hundred per cent water tariffs are collected from the people. It is important to mention that the annual income of the panchayat is more than 1.7 crores. Factors that play crucial role to make success of the activities of this panchayat are many. However the important factor is the quality of leadership as provided by the president of the panchayat and his team.

Source: Nayak, Bhargava and Subha 2004

**Box 3 : Experience of Kinnigoli Gram Panchayat in Dakshina Kannada**

This panchayat demonstrated that water supply schemes can be maintained by collecting tariffs from the households. The scheme comprises a bore well as the sources of water that feeds 5,000 liters capacity overhead tank. There are nearly 100 pipe connections to individual houses. The total cost of the system has been estimated at Rs 7 lakh. The people of this panchayat raised Rs. 70,000 against the 10 per cent as desired by the Sector Reforms Schemes. The panchayat ensured regular water supply to all the households. The panchayat expected to levy and collect a one time advances charge of Rs 1000 for each connection but failed to collect the water charges. It was decided to levy a higher rate on higher incremental consumption. A new tariff formula was devised for the Guttakadu scheme based on monthly consumption. The formula is, if a family consuming 3 Kls of water would pay Rs 50 the same rate is applicable up to 10 Kls. When a family is consuming 15 Kls they would pay Rs. 100 and for 30 Kls, they would pay Rs. 350. For implementing such tariff system the panchayat has put water flow meters on each of its pipe connections to the 113 houses. To keep a proper account of electric power consumed by the submersible pump, panchayats got a separate electric meter. The system is working very well and the cost collection rate is 100 per cent.

Source: Deccan Herald April 19, 2003

Decentralised governance ensured effective delivery of services like education, health care and poverty elimination programmes in Karnataka (Aziz et al 2000, Crook and Manor 1998; Sivanna 1998:29). The weaker sections' power over resources has increased through panchayats. It has been found that many SCs, STs and women beneficiaries under different schemes who crossed the poverty line, have experienced upward occupational mobility and many of them started repaying their loan (Aziz et al 2000).

**Box 4 : Efficiency in Service Delivery**

Did little to directly help pro-poor growth, or equity. Human development and spatial equity indirectly benefited from funding allocations and development programmes.

Owing to mobilisation of own resources of PRIs many development works are less effective, particularly welfare of downtrodden. Sectors like education and health improved a lot. Attendance both teachers and pupil increased. Public health facilities increased. About 26% in rural and 46% in urban case of access to Government health care facilities. Availability of doctors and paramedics in medical centers, respectively, 74% and 93%. Satisfaction with the behaviour of doctors are found highest (31%) in the State compared with other States. Primary schools are accessible within 1 km for 67% villages and 81% urban households. A relatively higher percentage of households (26%) in the State viewed their satisfaction with the behaviour of teachers.

State Government ensures that up to 20 per cent of the development expenditure spend for the upliftment of downtrodden but only 13.75 per cent of amount is being spent. Pro-poor outcomes were in fact a product of the synergy between local and central factors.

A review conducted by the Government of Karnataka observes that the functioning of school and health facilities improved considerably under the PRI set-up. There has been significant improvement in the area of medical and public health facilities and the supply of drugs (Government

of Karnataka 1989). Another study found that the attendance of doctors and paramedical staff improved considerably under the constant monitoring of local leaders in many PHCs and hospitals of Karnataka (Sekher 2001). Panchayats played a positive role in improving the quality of health care services by ensuring regular attendance of health care functionaries as well as by exerting moral pressure on the staff not to avoid their regular duties. The utilisation of resources which has been transferred to the PRIs is much better than it used to be under line departments. Developmental works are being executed more speedily and field staffs are better controlled under PRIs (Meenakshisundaram 1994).

### Enabling Environment (State and Society)

The success of decentralisation depends upon the state's commitment to democratic decentralisation to translate into four conventional types of measures/actions: (a) enabling, (b) financing, (c) supporting and (d) supervising. While the first two refer to creating the legal framework and securing the resources for the local authorities to operate, the second two refer to local institutional strengthening and related performance monitoring and legality controls.

The state should also accept responsibility for supervising local authorities in ways that go beyond the traditional administrative (legality) controls and financial auditing. Supervision must be extended to the specific monitoring of the performance of local authorities in the adoption and implementation of participatory planning, and it must cover both process and outcomes of such implementation. Performance monitoring would then enable a system of incentives and penalties to be established to support the adoption of local-level participatory planning. In West Bengal and Kerala democratic decentralisation is associated with the programme of radical agrarian reforms as they produced significant benefits for the poor in terms of participation, growth of agriculture production and human development (Webster, 2000; Crook and Sverrisson, 2001 cited in R.C. Crook, 2003). Kerala is best known for its successful human development programme, although the link with decentralisation is questioned by some (Bandyopheyay, 1997; Datta, 1997; Heller, 2001 cited in R.C. Crook, 2003). At the same time, the democratic culture with strong party structure and the presence of strong civil society has also contributed in challenging the local conservative elites and promoting pro-poor outcomes.

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## FUKUYAMA'S END OF HISTORY : TRIUMPH OF THE LIBERAL STATE

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*This research paper aims to examine the claim and interpretations of Fukuyama's thesis of the end of history. The problem of universal history, Hegelian idea of historical progress and Fukuyama's conclusions drawn from Alexander Kojève's interpretation of Hegelian philosophy have been evaluated in this paper. Fukuyama's claim that liberal political systems are embodiment of Hegelian universal homogeneous state, the consummating point of human progress seems to be a 'meta narrative'. The paper concludes that triumph of liberal state is more an event of history rather than the end of history itself.*

### Fukuyama's End of History : Triumph of the Liberal State

Social theory aims to explain realities about social life and it claims validity, sometimes at the universal level, on the bases of logical consistency and empirical verification. At the same time counter claims are raised and the validity of a theory is tested. Theory, in both forms, normative and scientific is likely to have an ideology in disguise. As students of social science we should try to unravel or 'deconstruct' the ideological assumption behind a theory. Francis Fukuyama, a Professor of Harvard University wrote an article "The End of History?" in 1989, in which he had a question mark in the title. Later, on he expanded this article and produced a book, *The End of History and the Last Man* (no question mark). In this book, Fukuyama reinterpreted Hegelian concept of history as interpreted by Alexander Kojève, a Russian emigrant who delivered lectures on Hegel during 1930s in France. For Hegel, history is the unilinear way of progress, which is determined by the struggle of ideas. Each historical stage is a way forward in the path of progress. Hegel also presumes that the process of development will reach at the consummating point where the struggle of ideas will cease to exist. Hence, it is a perfect stage of development without inner contradictions and for Hegel that stage is the end of history, the end point of progress. Marx also accepts Hegel's views on history and he also declares that communism will be the final destiny of historical development.

Fukuyama applies Hegelian concept of the end of history to claim that liberal democracy is an embodiment of Hegelian stage of the end of ideological evolution. For him, after the collapse of communism, the ideology of liberal democracy has no rival. Therefore, the struggle of ideas has ended and history has reached at the final stage in which Anglo-American liberal democratic states represent Hegel's universal homogeneous state. The liberal states for Fukuyama provide perfect freedom for all individuals on an equal basis. Therefore, the ideology of liberal democracy has universal legitimacy. In support of his thesis Fukuyama concentrates on Kojevian interpretation of Hegel. The aim of this research paper is to examine the claim of the end of history actualized in the liberal democracy. In this context, Kojève's lectures on Hegelian philosophy, the basis of

Fukuyama's thought will also be analysed in the light of the context in which Kojeve focused on Hegel. Is it true that we have reached at the stage of the end of the ideological evolution? How far Fukuyama is correct in his assertion of universal validity of the liberal democracy after the collapse of the socialist system in the U.S.S.R.? All these issues will be discussed in this paper.

While delivering his lectures, Kojeve primarily focused on Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit and neglected Hegel's other writings. However, the ideological position of Kojeve remained to be controversial. Allan Bloom claims, "Kojeve is the most thoughtful, the most learned, the most profound of those Marxists, who, dissatisfied with the thinness of Marx's account of the human and metaphysical ground of his teaching turned to Hegel as the truly philosophic source of that teaching"<sup>1</sup> Although it is also doubtful that Kojeve's interpretation can be regarded as Marxist. In view of Fukuyama, "If Marx was Hegel's greatest nineteenth-century interpreter, then Kojeve was surely his greatest interpreter in the twentieth century".<sup>2</sup> Fukuyama regards Kojeve's interpretation as liberal version of Hegelianism, but the prevailing intellectual trends in France do not approve his contention. Mark Poster has pointed out, "The catastrophic defeat of France in 1940 has discredited liberal bourgeois intellectual and political traditions, leaving the nation in a conceptual vaccum."<sup>3</sup> In this context, Kojeve tried to generate a new interest in Hegel, and his study of Hegel's Phenomenology "was an intellectual source for the renewal of Marxism, for Sartre's existentialism and perhaps even for the structuralism of the 1960".<sup>4</sup>

From the above-mentioned facts, it can be proved that renewed interest of French intellectuals during 1930s in Hegel was a result of the collapse of the liberal order. As Poster remarks, "For Kojeve, Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit was the answer to liberal-bourgeois metaphysics and politics".<sup>5</sup> Thus Kojeve's interpretation of Hegel appears to be far from liberal. Secondly, Fukuyama in Kojevian style (who neglected Hegel's other writings) fails to consider Kojeve's other writings such as Attempt at a Reasoned History of Pagan Philosophy published posthumously and articles like "Hegel, Marx and Christianity". Riley has rightly pointed out that "an accurate portrait of Kojeve" can be built up" by keeping in view of Kojeve's entire ensemble".<sup>6</sup> The fallacy of Fukuyama lies in his over-dependence on Kojeve's central work, Introduction to the Reading of Hegel. Fukuyama submits clearly, "We are interested not in Hegel per se but in Hegel-as-interpreted by Kojeve, or perhaps a new synthetic philosopher named Hegel-Kojeve".<sup>7</sup>

In sharp contrast to the accepted view of Hegel as an apostle of idealism, Fukuyama regards Hegel as a philosopher of freedom and in his view Hegel provides us with an understanding of liberalism that is nobler than that of Hobbes and Locke".<sup>8</sup> He also accepts that liberalism is interlinked with capitalism, and he considerably supports capitalist economy or market economy while advocating liberal democracy. But he ignores the fact that in his early writings of Jena period (1801-7), Hegel criticized the organization of work under capitalism. Jean Hyppolite,

another notable interpreter of Hegel in France and a contemporary of Kojève, highlighted Hegel's criticism of market economy as Poster remarks, "Hippolyte, for one, drew the attention of Marxists to Hegel's remarkable comprehension of the dehumanizing tendencies of a nascent industrial and market economy."<sup>9</sup> Before writing Phenomenology of Spirit, Hegel studied Adam Smith's Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations and he was critical of liberal economy and bourgeois society. Similarly, Kojève's interpretation of Hegel is not consistent with the principles of liberalism and Poster rightly points out "In Kojève's reading of Hegel, the concepts of liberalism were adamantly denied and the basis for Marx's concept of class struggle was laid".<sup>10</sup> Therefore, Fukuyama's presentation of Hegel as a 'nobler' interpretation of liberalism is not consistent with Kojève's interpretation. Actually Kojève in his lectures on Hegel made an "attempt to discover Marxist ideas in Hegel."<sup>11</sup>

Fukuyama's thesis of the end of history is based on two types of arguments, one is empirical and another is philosophical. He maintains that in the contemporary world no alternative ideology [after the collapse of fascism and communism] of liberalism exists. The nations all over the world have been gradually making progress towards liberal democratic social order. Fukuyama has mentioned that in 1900 there were only 13 nations having democratic rule while in 1990 the number has increased to 61.<sup>12</sup> In his view, the twin principles of liberty and equality on which democracy is based have been spreading worldwide. Hence Fukuyama posits that the direction of human progress is unitary and universal. In this process he accepts the decisive role of natural science, which succeeded in creating immense wealth. Therefore, the desiring part of man has been fully satisfied so far. But Fukuyama himself is not satisfied with economic interpretation of liberalism and he bitterly criticizes 'economization of our thinking in the past four hundred years'. Therefore, he turns to Hegel interpreted by Kojève to find out non-materialistic basis of liberalism.

Kojevian reading of Hegel is the philosophical basis on which Fukuyama's thesis of the end of history is based. Kojève discovered the dialectic of master-slave relationships as the key to understand Hegelian philosophy. For Hegel, man is essentially self-conscious, that is to exist for itself or being for himself but, to manifest itself in the objective truth a man has to negate his natural being or biological existence. Therefore, the 'first men' (living in the state of nature) risked their lives in the battle of recognition by others or pure prestige (the latter was a Kojevian addition). In this struggle, who risked their lives became the masters and who surrendered themselves to the desiring part of their soul or desire to live became slaves. The slaves recognized the former as the master. The latter failed to negate his animal nature or instinct of self-preservation and he failed to attain freedom. Therefore the basis of class division in the society is one's attitude towards death, a purely subjective phenomenon and every human being had freedom of will to choose between animality or natural being and freedom. Fukuyama concludes that "freedom

begins only where nature ends."<sup>13</sup> It is also clear that Hegel adheres to the Kantian principle of moral freedom and his belief that a man has the potentiality of moral progress.

The master being recognized by the slaves were not satisfied because they were recognized by inferior human beings, not by equals. They used the slave as a tool to satisfy their needs. In this way, the master failed to attain recognition for which he risked his life. Kojeve has pointed out in this condition the mastery is 'tragic end and existential impasse.'<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, the slave working for their masters transform the nature, and in this process they transform themselves. Hence, the slave has the potentiality to change the world. Kojeve lucidly remarks, "Where there is work there is necessarily change, progress, historical evolution."<sup>15</sup> Thus, the slaves are the revolutionary forces and Kojeve's remarks echo Marxian concept of the proletariat as the most progressive force who leads the historical process towards a better world. Kojeve proclaims that "History is the history of the working slave."<sup>16</sup> On the contrary, the master leads a life of leisure and in this way he becomes static. The above description of master-slave relationship of Kojeve seems to be nearer to Marxism rather than liberalism.

The slave failed to transcend his biological existence and to realize freedom for fear of the death. Therefore, he is dissatisfied and his dissatisfaction is creative. Through work itself, the slave learns to negate his instinct and he develops self-discipline within himself. Fukuyama points out that the slave is the inventor of technology and in his view, "Modern natural science is not the invention of idle masters, who have everything they want, but of slaves, who are forced to work and who do not like their present condition."<sup>17</sup> But this view is hardly convincing. The toiling slave cannot invent new tools and he is not in a position to control and own them. The capitalists or the masters alone can invest huge money in research, and invention of new tools is certainly profitable for the masters. Marx analyzed the role for machine in capitalism and he concluded that science is 'directed against labour.'<sup>18</sup> Mechanization of production necessarily leads to unemployment of the workers. Therefore, the above position of Fukuyama about the slave appears to be misleading.

Kojeve asserts that through work the slave changes himself and at last he overcomes his slavery. He points out that here comes the role of ideology without which freedom cannot be realized. Therefore, the slave "imagines a series of ideologies, by which he seeks to justify himself his servitude, to reconcile the ideal of liberty with the fact of slavery."<sup>19</sup> This explanation of ideology, to some extent resembles with Marxian concept of ideology as false consciousness, which conceals the real nature of socio-economic relationship. Ideology, for Kojeve signifies imaginary relationship between the slave and his material world. Kojeve mentions stoicism as the first slave ideology, which lays emphasis on natural equality of all men. Secondly, for stoics, self-control is the highest virtue, which is achieved by the slave in the process of work. Kojeve refers Christianity as another slave ideology in which all men are equal before God. God is

regarded as the universal Master and all men are slaves to Him. However, Kojeve is aware that Christian ideal of equality is related to other world and Christianity "does not take account of social distinctions, but leaves them intact. Equality is transposed into the beyond (men are bothers "in Jesus Christ.")".<sup>20</sup> Kojeve is also critical of bourgeois ideology which is a new slavery in his view because the master or the capitalist is enslaved to the private property and capital.

Kojeve discovers the dialectic of the master and the slave representing the two divergent ideas of status quo and change respectively as a determining factor in Hegelian concept of historical progress. The master and the slave both are not truly satisfied and free. For Kojeve, Hegel postulates that equal recognition of all by the equals, that is an ideal of freedom can be realized in Hegelian universal homogeneous state. Kojeve also makes it clear that such a state is only possible after the suppression of the opposition between Master and Slave. In the final struggle the slave suppresses the mastery and becomes citizens or 'complete, absolutely free man.' Kojeve explains simply that in the act of suppression of the mastery, the slave simply kills the master or the latter dies as a Master. For Hegel, this stage is the end point of history in which both the masters and the slaves become citizens of the universal homogeneous state. In this state the desire for recognition is fully satisfied for all.

The most controversial part of Fukuyama's thought is his exposition of the liberal democracy as an embodiment of Hegelian universal homogeneous state in which all men are equally recognized. The desire for recognition rooted in human spirit (a thymotic part of human soul) and responsible for the beginning of history has been best satisfied in liberal political systems. But, Fukuyama seems to be ambivalent on the issue of the satisfaction of 'recognition'. He has expressed his doubt in these words, "Indeed, the modern economic world could only emerge after desire had been liberated, so to speak, at the expense of thymos. The historical process that begins with the master's bloody battle ends in some sense with the modern bourgeois inhabitant of contemporary liberal democracies, who pursues material gain rather than glory".<sup>21</sup> He also accepts that capitalist economy based on free market is only 'viable economic system' in the world. Therefore, Fukuyama is a penchant supporter of neo-liberalism and he suggests for the creation of a 'universal consumer culture' for the whole world. In this case, a man is primarily a consumer and he is 'recognized' on the basis of consumption. We are what we consume. Therefore, capitalism has nothing to do with human sprit or thymos, and the centrality of the capitalist economy is conflicting self-interests of individuals.

Fukuyama affirms that Hegelian principle of recognition provides a more appropriate explanation of liberal democracy than that of economic one. He also asserts that in the contemporary scenario the prospect of the development of any rival ideology is very grim and there is no struggle of ideas, which drives history forward. Hence, the end of the history has come into reality. Fukuyama also quotes Kojeve who proclaimed that America represented

Marx's classless society after the Second World War. Fukuyama's above claim about liberal democracy appears to be fallacious. Hegel, as Kojve explains, saw that actualization of universal homogeneous state in Napoleonic empire and for that reason history ended in 1806. Kojeve makes it very clear in the following way, "This total definitive reality is the Napoleonic Empire; for Hegel in 1806 – the year of the composition of the Phenomenology – this empire is a 'universal and homogeneous state 'which' reunites the whole of humanity ... and "suppresses" in its womb all "specific differences: nations, classes, social groups and families."<sup>22</sup>

Kojeve further points out that for Hegel, Napoleon himself was not conscious about the realization of the climax of the universal history. Kojeve submits that the role of philosophy for Hegel is to 'understand' and 'reveal' it through discourse. Therefore, Hegel understood and revealed the end of history realized in Napoleonic Empire. For Hegel, dialectic method reveals the dialectical movement of the real history. The dialectical process of knowledge ends when it attains the absolute truth, which reflects in the end of the real history. Similarly, it implies that Fukuyama's end of the history is the absolute truth and like Hegel, he can only understand and reveal the end of history. Kojeve's position is ambivalent towards the end of history and he clearly expresses his doubts, "The perfect state ...? No doubt possible, but one is far from it."<sup>23</sup> He also admits that Hegel himself was aware of the fact that the state was not actually realized in all its perfection and he found only germ of this state. Kojeve makes it clear that Hegelian state "will only be transformed into truth by negative action, which, in destroying the world which does not correspond to the idea, will create through this very destruction of the world which conforms to the ideal."<sup>24</sup> It is clear that Kojeve is not certain about the end of history and he finds its 'germ' in 1806. Fukuyama extends Kojeve's argument that the 'germ' of 1806 has been fully realized in liberal democracy. But after the catastrophic event of 9/11, the confidence of Fukuyama has been eroded to some extent. He admits that Islam in radical form "rejects the most basic principles of modernity". He also submits that 'Islam-fascism' (Islam in radical variant) constituted "an ideological challenge that is in some ways more basic than one posed by communism". However, Fukuyama contends that 'Islam-fascism' is not "equally viable cultural system."<sup>25</sup>

The end of history depicted by Kojeve replapses the 'last man' in the animality again. Fukuyama mentions that "the end of history means also the end of both art and philosophy and therewith, his own life activity."<sup>26</sup> He further elaborates this gloomy picture in the words of Kojeve, "what would disappear... is not only philosophy or the search for discursive wisdom, but also that wisdom itself. For in these post-historical animals, there would no longer be any (discursive) understanding of the world and of self."<sup>27</sup> Here it may be relevant to ponder over the ideas of Marx regarding the end of philosophy. In German Ideology, Marx dearly argues that the end of philosophy means the end of speculative philosophy as such and thereafter, positive science begins. Kojeve appears to accept Marx's view when he writes, "Hegelianism is alone

translating itself into existence {at least in so far as history is not definitely not completed} through social and political action properly speaking "revolutionary" or Marxist."<sup>28</sup> Hence it is clear that Kojeve regards Marxism as the outgrowth of Hegelianism and his views are, to great extent, consistent with Marxism. The fallacy of Fukuyama is that he applies Kojeve's interpretation of Hegel without taking into account of his context and his theoretical position.

Fukuyama contends that liberty and equality are two underlying principles of liberalism and these have been perfectly realized in the Anglo-American liberal states. But he ignores the fact that since the advent of liberalism there has been a manifestation of the contradiction between the twin principles of liberalism: liberty and equality. Due to this contradiction liberalism has changed its face many times from negative liberalism to neo-liberalism via positive liberalism. In the political realm, liberalism recognizes men as politically equal by granting equal voting right and the voter is expected to cast his vote in the common interest. On the other hand in the liberal capitalist economy an individual pursues his own self-interest in a throat-cutting competition in the market. Fukuyama in his new book, Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity has expressed his concern about radically individualistic culture prevailing in America and he suggests the recapitulation of civic culture.<sup>29</sup> In the contemporary phase of globalization, the inequality among the rich and the poor is increasing. Therefore, recognition of all individuals on equal basis in economy remains a distant goal. Hence, it is difficult to agree with Fukuyama who proclaims that liberal societies are free from contradictions. It has been proved historically that the principle of equality cannot be fully actualized in capitalism.

Fukuyama proclaims that liberal democracy is a 'decent and humane institution, and no better alternative form of government exists in the contemporary world. On this basis he claims universal validity of liberal democracy. Bhikhu Parekh (without mentioning the name of Fukuyama) argues against this claim. He has focused on the interlinking of democracy with liberalism. He points out that in liberal democracy, democracy as a form of government is defined within the limits of liberalism and liberalism is the dominant partner. In the west as well as the east, democracy has a long tradition starting from Athens and Vaishali respectively. Parekh does not accept that liberal democracy can be culturally neutral and for him "liberalization of democracy occurred differently in different western societies depending on their history, traditions and social structure."<sup>30</sup> Therefore, there cannot be one variant of liberal democracy and liberalism and democracy can be combined differently that is determined by a country's historical traditions and cultural values. Parekh suggests that democracy can be made the dominant partner and that can define liberalism within its own limits. The reason behind his suggestion is that "the democratic part of liberal democracy, consisting in such things as free elections, free speech and the right to equality has proved far more attractive outside the west and is more universalizable than the liberal component."<sup>31</sup> Fukuyama fails to recognize cultural diversities among nations

and his prescription of liberal democracy for the whole world is ethnocentric. Modernization implies the Europeanization of the whole world that is not feasible and desirable.

Liberalism can be understood as a theory of modernity and Fukuyama firmly believes in a single and coherent process of modernization. He prescribes that all nations will go through the same path of progress. Contrary to this view, post-modernists reject every kind of universalism and they argue that the whole project of modernity is now exhausted. Lyotard, an illuminating figure of post-modernity, defines postmodern "as incredulity towards metanarratives"<sup>32</sup> Belief in progress through science and achievement of freedom through reason have lost their relevance in the contemporary world. Therefore, Fukuyama's thesis of the end of history presented in the post-modern fashion appears to be a response to post-modernity. He reinforces modernity in disguise of the end of history but he is not ready to concede that the enlightenment project of modernity (liberalism is a part of this project) has lost its appeal. Habermas, though critical of post-modernity submits that modernity is an incomplete project but he attacks on instrumental and calculative concept of reason on which capitalism is based. In opposition to this concept of reason, he puts forward the concept of communicative reason, which means free and open communication and expansion of public sphere. Fukuyama's insistence on the capitalist modernization creates barrier for free and open communication between different cultures.

Every social theory emerges out of specific socio-economic conditions and a theory can be properly understood in their context. Kojeve's lectures on Hegel were a response to prevailing conditions of France. The theoretical position of Kojeve was controversial. For some scholars, his interpretation was seen as an attempt to seek Marxist ideas in Hegelianism and for others the principles laid down in Kojeve lectures were far from Marxism. However, it was beyond doubt that French intellectuals, turned towards Hegel as a consequence of disillusionment with liberal principles. Fukuyama applies Kojeve's concepts like the dialectic of the master and the slave, desire for recognition and universal homogeneous state to support his thesis of the end of the history and thus, ignoring the context of Kojeve. The end of history, the presumed end point of ideological evolution fails to present a utopia of a better and humane world. The kernel of Fukuyama's thesis is that there is no alternative to liberal democracy. Hence, liberal democracy has universal validity and it embodies absolute truth revealed by Fukuyama himself. Here it can be argued that any philosophy or idea is relative. Post-modernists rightly assert the relativity of knowledge and rejection of universalism. They also stress the exhaustion of modernity itself. Therefore Fukuyama's prescription of modernization for the whole world does not seem to be convincing. It appears to be a meta-narrative. History as the struggle of ideas will end with the end of human civilization. Therefore, the end of history may be the beginning of history.

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## RURAL TRANSFORMATION THROUGH BASIC TECHNOLOGIES

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*Though India tried to adapt the project of 'Modern Science' from a colonial to a nation building project, it has essentially been perceived as anti fragment for its failure to find cheap technology alternatives to people's problems. Industrialisation perpetrated by science and technology and limited largely to cities, has lead to the prosperity of cities and impoverishment of villages by way of stagnation, poverty, disease and farmers suicides, due to multiple failures not only of science but also due to lack of political will and pandemic corruption in implementation of government schemes. In this dismal scenario, two villages, Kuttumbakkam, in Tamil Nadu and Hivare Bazar, in Maharashtra among others provide outstanding examples of how basic technology, mobilization of limited village resources, galvanizing people's cynicism into voluntary action and tremendous personal sacrifice on the part of panchayat leaders has the key to transforming rural India and the lives of the poor.*

### Science as colonial project

India encountered 'modern science' as part of the colonial project. It was not that the Indians were unenlightened people prior to British came, but Eurocentric science which its specific cultural and geographical context was imposed on subject peoples as 'modern'. Local knowledge systems were marginalized, subjected to its hegemonic ascendancy and even derided. Massive industrialisation was favoured against low technology and cost effective sustainable development. While modern science had positive benefits in some sectors, it has been responsible for dependency of the villages on the city, the regions on the capital and the subaltern on the elites.

Western science comprising the Great Surveys (the Geological, the Botanical and the Trigonometric) and Universities [Vishvanathan 1998] was exclusivist, serving the British politico-administrative complex and largely unconcerned with improving the lives of ordinary Indians.

### Science as Nationalist project

Science was adopted as part of the nationalist or nation building project in the post colonial period. Though scientism had assumed autonomy from the colonial establishment with setting up of the India Association for the Cultivation of Science in 1900, it was Har Dayal who trumped science over religion, a sentiment later echoed by Nehru, where he said 'dams and laboratories became the temples of modern India' [Vishvanathan 1998].

The entire project of science, given the economic situation in India, was state centric and state controlled from setting up of laboratories and institutions, to funding university research, to defining the areas of development. Jawaharlal Nehru laid great emphasis on development of autonomous, self reliant and high quality science and technology structures, dedicated to both teaching and theoretical and applied research. [ Anonymous 2005]. These institutions were tied to the West either for funding, affiliation or collaboration. They followed the trends and discourses set by the West. They were busy cloning, adapting and diffusing technologies that were produced in the West in a bid to leap frog the dismally low levels of development by pushing for Manhattan project-type enterprises in nuclear energy, electronics, pharmaceutical or space research. [Goldemberg 1998]. Development was thought to coincide with possession of nuclear weapons or

capability to launch satellites and such programmes would convert developing countries into 20th century industrialized states. [ibid].

#### **Tasks set out for science and technology, post independence**

Social Justice was one of the founding pillars of the republic. As Gandhi pointed out, true freedom meant wiping out unemployment, bridging the gulf between the rich and the poor, banishing communal strife and ensuring that million of Indians participated in nation building. [Rao 2005]. The Preamble laid out the road map for the political leadership on behalf of the people –to secure to ourselves justice social, political economic and equality of status and opportunity. The right to adequate means of livelihood and ownership and control of natural resources (Art 39), free and compulsory education upto the age of 14 (Art 45), raising nutrition levels and public health (Art 47), organising agriculture and animal husbandry on modern scientific lines (Art 48) were enshrined in the Constitution.

The 'gigantic' responsibility set out for science in post independence was to turn a poor country, devastated by natural calamities, plagued by disease and man made disasters into a modern developed nation. Science had to replicate the wonders it had effected in the developed world –improve life expectancy, increase agricultural output, improve production and communications.

#### **Report Card of Science and Technology**

India has made tremendous progress in science and technology (S&T), considering the benefits that have accrued to society, especially with indigenously developed technologies. But despite our claims of being a scientific powerhouse, a leading knowledge centre and having the world's fourth largest workforce, there is growing disquiet over the loss of energy, creativity and quality of our scientific institutions. Except for the centres of excellence, given the size of the country, they appears as islands surrounded by a sea of mediocrity. [ Anonymous 2005].

The spectacular failures of the Defence Research and Development Organisation, the virtual collapse of the agricultural universities and the Krishi Vigyan Kendras, the decline of science departments in universities and repeated inability of meteorology departments to predict weather [ibid] which has wreaked periodic havoc as instances where the S&T establishment has let us down.

#### **Science as Bureaucratized Project**

Just as government is paralysed by bureaucratic delivery of development and services, so also is the project of science. Science has become a bureaucratized grid of laboratories fumbling over import substitution. Homi Babha had opined that creation of mammoth bureaucracies had emptied the universities of outstanding talent who could have served as seeds of creative dissent. [Vishwanathan 1998]

With bureaucratisation science lost its democratic domain. Science returned to the democratic domain with the great debates and protests on S&T coming not from academics but from political movements such as Chipko, Bhopal Gas disaster and agitations against dams. A few scientists

were however also involved [ibid 1998].

In the second phase of post colonial era, where neo colonialism parades as Globalisation and Liberalisation, S&T have to undergo radical transformation. Science still continues to be centralized and state centric, despite proliferation of the internet and other technologies. Knowledge and its validity is still controlled and censored by new regimes. Any invention whether it is fuel or new modes of transport has to be officially stamped with the state's authorization.<sup>1</sup>

Alternatives, such as bio fuels, ethanol produced from sugarcane molasses as widely used in Brazil and which has replaced gasoline [Goldemberg 1998] are seen with suspicion. The reason—they challenge the state's political as well as the S&T establishment which rarely come up with cheap alternatives to solve people's problems and want to pattern third world development on the industrialized countries' model. The patent regime further, strengthens state control, along with that of the developed world over the developing..

### **Science as anti fragment**

Science has served 'modern India', represented by its elites. Nehruvian formulation of science in retrospect, by and large neglected the voiceless and powerless rural masses. Of course this is not only a failure of science and technology, since it is combined with lack of political will, poor design of schemes by the policy think tanks, and rabid corruption in implementation of schemes.

Pre Mughals, village prosperity enabled people to generously contribute grains to the kings. Villages had their own self governing systems, collected local taxes, according to administrative needs, and managed their own natural resources very efficiently through traditional water harvesting, soil and bio diversity conservation methods. Alongside abundant natural resources, which they harvested wisely and sustainably, they also developed numerous local technologies using local wisdom, knowledges, skills and resources to process their food, made their own cotton and silk clothing, besides other things. Thus was thriving a mini village economy with a variety of local industries employing the village population. [Rangasamy 2005].

Industrialisation not only centralized technologies (hence industries) but more devastatingly, shattered the self confidence of villagers and built a sense of self inadequacy and disempowerment. Secondly, it displaced huge populations, employed in labour intensive village industries. Other ill effects included urbanization and its consequences, pollution, energy and resource depletion. That "industrialization means sophistication, means better economic growth, means progress of society was indoctrinated to students in schools and colleges and has came to be internalized by society. Industrialization means stagnation [ibid] of the fragment.

In the globalized scenario and about a decade preceding it, destruction of agriculture, unemployment, rise in illicit liquor brewing, drunkenness, violence, farmers suicides and rural waste typify India. Alongside the American style mall and cyber cities culture brimming with wealth, 36 percent of the population still clings for dear life below the poverty line, 2 million children die each year before they are one year old and India has a malnourishment rate nearly twice the levels reported in sub Saharan Africa. [Rao 2005]

### Transforming India through basic science and technology

In such a dismal scenario, dramatic failures overshadow the success of science. Post Independence, the miracle of science, which was to deliver India from poverty and other ills, to a developed country, has moderately succeeded. But there appears to be much hope from the fragment. Two villages, one Kuthambakkam in Tamil Nadu and another Hiware Bazar in Maharashtra, among others, have emerged as models of rural transformation. Basic science and technology coupled with inspiring and dedicated leadership has galvanized people's participation into transforming the lives of the villagers, far from the state centric establishments of science and the heavy hand of bureaucracy, which for decades has been doling out largesse of state through multiple schemes, without much success.

#### Kuthambakkam Panchayat

Elango Rangasamy is the village panchayat president of Kuthambakkam.<sup>2</sup> Having BSc in chemical engineering from the elite IIT (Chennai), he gave up a lucrative job with Oil India in Orissa and joined the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, Chennai so that he could travel daily to his village to rid it of abject poverty, drunkenness, violence against women and caste disharmony between majority dalits and Vanniar. He ensured that his wife Sumathy did her masters in chemistry and got a job thus allowing him to resign his and return to his village.

Elango, himself a Dalit, initiated a number of projects towards making the village self sufficient—a thor dhal processing unit,<sup>3</sup> a diary project,<sup>4</sup> a soap making unit,<sup>5</sup> a low cost dual use toilet,<sup>6</sup> a bakery project,<sup>7</sup> groundnut oil production where simple machines have been fabricated for dehusking and the shells have been used to produce electricity for the soap making unit.<sup>8</sup> Elango has developed a low cost brick making unit which employs about 60 villagers, where low cost bricks produced from here, are used to build houses for about Rs 45000. Fifty percent of the price of the brick goes to the labourers as wages. These bricks have also gone towards making of Samathuvapurams (Harmony Estates) or twin houses with a common wall, one inhabited by a Dalit and the other by a Brahmin. Such Samathuvapurams are now officially funded by the government to promote communal harmony and exist in many villages in Tamil Nadu.

Elango is a messianic Gandhi for his village. His moment of truth came when he was suspended for cutting costs and building the village storm drain, from the waste of a granite factory, incurring a cost of Rs 4 lakh, as opposed to the Rs 15 lakh sanctioned. He was violated state's 'prescribed norms' and deprived the transporters their ferrying opportunity and contractors their civil works. Vested interested worked overtime and Elango was suspended from office under Section 205 of the Tamil Nadu Panchayat Act [TNPA]. He was devastated. Then, Sumathy who was living in Chennai, visited Kuthambakkam and gave him a Tamil version of Gandhi's 'My experiments with Truth'. The book gave him grit to request the Secretary to the Government to summon the village assembly and ascertain the charges before villagers. On Jan 10, 1999, 1300 people 'acquitted' Elango after the day long trial, as the order revoking his suspension came before nightfall. "I understood Gandhi that day," he says. "First be

truthful, then be fearless." [Goodnews 2005]

Elango admits the criticality of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment and his pledge to create village level republics restoring the self sufficiency of the villages, which had been devastated by industrialisation and made the villagers consumers instead of producers. All his experiments with science are headed in the direction of value addition to products, employment to villages to restore their self confidence and make each village self sufficient.<sup>9</sup> His economics for village clusters has been inspired by JC Kumarappa.

Elango has an appropriate technology development center, part of which is funded by ONGC, Association for India Development, USA, and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). The Panchayat Academy founded by Elango now trains sarpanchas and members of panchayats from a number of villages in Tamil Nadu towards the road of self sufficiency. He aims to touch 200 villages across India with this academy. In Elango's Kuthambakkam, basic science has been messianic, ensuring livelihood, employment and qualitative change in the lives of villagers as far as education, health and hygiene and infrastructure is concerned. This, the mainstream, state centric and centrally controlled bureaucratized science could not deliver.

#### **Hiware Bazar**

Four years before the state directed 73rd Amendment centralized initiatives of decentralization and participatory government were launched, Hiware Bazar showed that "Hamare gaon me hamar raj" (in our villages only we will rule) can work. The initiative came from village youth who approached Popatrao Pawar, to contest elections.<sup>10</sup> He was elected sarpanch of Hiware Bazar in 1989, a drought prone district of Ahmednagar, Maharashtra.

In the summer months, there was little water to drink and none for agriculture. The village common lands were overgrazed as people tried to supplement their agricultural incomes by investing in cattle and themselves suffering the drought. This drought situation had its roots in the 1972 drought from which people never recovered. [Anand undated]. It was followed by migration, barren fields, unemployment, wife beating, rampant alcoholism and a murder of a fellow villager in 1982. From the state's perception the civil service saw Hiware Bazar as a punishment posting, even police ensured that they were well armed before visiting the village. Local bootleggers had a steady market in the unemployed youth.

Pawar's initial strategy of unilaterally planting imli trees in the village ended with people ransacking the trees. He then contemplated a participatory strategy involving villagers in the selection and execution of programmes. He began by getting citizens to chalk out a priority list of urgent needs.<sup>11</sup>

All projects undertaken had following characteristic (i) shramdaan (voluntary labour) (ii) strong community rules that governed various facets of village life and for which they had to sacrifice personally. (iii) a combination of community initiatives and government schemes to transform the institution of panchayat and the face of the village.

Basic science and ecology approaches such as banning unlimited grazing on community lands, led to regeneration of grasslands. In fact, they later sold fodder to neighbouring villages. Tree felling was banned and every citizens became their custodian. Aforestation was undertaken with 10 lakh trees being planted through voluntary labour. A water harvesting project was initiated with government help. The aquifer was sufficiently recharged to provide water for farms. Private owners then gave part of their land for the water harvesting projects, to benefit their agricultural production on the remaining land. Water harvesting plans were put in place. A database of all government yojanas (schemes) in agriculture and water development programmes was created. Using dairy science, a total of 201 cross bred cows and buffaloes, families were able to increase their monthly income to Rs 30,000 per month on increased yields of milk alone.<sup>12</sup>

The community put a ban on water intensive crops, bore wells for their destructive potential and gobar was generally used as fertilizer. The results were fascinating. There was tremendous improvement in the quality of life in this village, as the increased incomes of farmers were ploughed back into social sector. A middle school section was added to the primary school. Panchayat spent on uniforms and books of students. Hygiene and sanitation was emphasized with money from a government scheme was utilized to build 1700 toilets at the cost of Rs 3500 each.

The village received the Adarsh Gaon (ideal village) award from Government of Maharashtra in 1993. Hiware Bazar adopted the four tenets of its more illustrious neighbour, Ralego Siddhi, where the charismatic Anna Hazare had suggested charabandi (ban on grazing), nashabandhi (ban on alcohol), nassbandhi (family planning) and katbandhi (ban on deforestation). Besides just benefits for villagers, this participatory initiative had other uncalculated consequences. Access to the district and government machinery became easier. Bureaucratic machinery was greatly increased as a consequence of the success story of Hiware Bazar. Most officials were extremely cooperative and eager to enhance the successes of their efforts. [Anand; undated]. The status of women and backward classes too has improved with women planning and implementing a number of programmes and indulging in decision making through their mahila mandals.

This participatory initiative is not without its shortcomings. For instance, the shortage of labour and the relative abundance of land has not propelled the community into implementing significant land reform. The few large holdings that exist are not challenged sufficiently. Instead landowners rent out 2–3 acres plots to landless families which till and farm the land, and pay a rent in return. However the transformation that has been effected in the lifestyles of anti social elements who are today farming and selling milk instead of creating trouble is something worth amazing since the best of state action in reforming such elements was to say the least modest.

### Conclusion

Indian Science is some sense has become an extension of the colonial project –statist, centralized, with its own rubrics and in some sense apathetic to the democratic ethos set out in the national movement. It has a hegemonic preponderance and derides the traditional, self-sustaining knowledge systems of the rural and subaltern. In doing so it excludes the empowerment of the

rural masses. Where mainstream science and establishment has failed, the rural messiahs, with high levels of commitment and personal sacrifice are stepping in to make a qualitative difference to the life of their peoples with basic and sustainable science and technologies, within the context of the support provided by policy initiatives such as the 73rd Amendment. Though replication of these success stories seems to be difficult even in neighbouring districts such human endeavours provide hope, where science and technology has in some way rendered them hopeless. This appears to be the Gandhian way forward for the transformation of rural India, with full powers to panchayats and more so to the people of India, to determine their own destinies.

#### Endnotes

1. The shocking story of rural lad from Tamil Nadu who is supposed to have "invented" bio fuel and who was given publicity by the media, is a case in point. He had to travel to New Delhi (the centre), to "prove" his invention and when he returned his entire lab was burnt.
2. Kuthambakkam with a population of 5000, in 1040 households is spread over 70 hamlets, over an area of 36 sqkms, about 40 kms from Chennai.
3. Which processes and sells dhal in Kuthambakkam and neighbouring villages at cheaper prices and provides employment to rural women;
4. Where excess milk available in Kuthambakkam and nearby villages is processed into marketable milk products;
5. Which uses a old bullock cart wheel fitted with bearings and pulleys which mixes soap ingredients and makes soap;
6. Which is pre fabricated and can be used for bath as well;
7. Where bread, buns, biscuits for the consumption of the village are produced;
8. Interview with Mr. Elango Rangasamy, while the author was on a study trip to Kuthambakkam.10 July 2005.
9. He found that the villagers consumed Rs 60 lakh worth of goods and services per month and that Rs 50 lakh worth of this produce could be done in the village level itself. About seven to eight villages form a free trade zone. They identify and produce goods and services without overlap and consume each other's produce. Of course he has identified the government schemes and seen that he encouraged villagers to avail of these to benefit the village.
10. Popatrao Pawar had MCom degree and was working for an airline company in Pune.
11. The priority areas listed out were employment, health and education among others.
12. Interview with Mr. Popatrao Pawar, while the author was on a study trip to Hiware Bazaar. 19 August 2005.

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## POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF HEGEL AND SRI AUROBINDO : A COMPARISON

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*The paper makes an attempt to study the political philosophy of Hegel and Sri Aurobindo in a comparative framework. Some aspects of the political ideas of Hegel, deeply influenced by the Greek tradition and contemporary developments such as German enlightenment and French Revolution, find similarity with that of Sri Aurobindo, who derived richly from Indian tradition. The theory of evolution highly influenced the ideas of both the thinkers, though both used the theory to different ends. While Hegel believed that the development of human society culminates with the arrival of state on the scene, Sri Aurobindo further extended the theory and argued that only with the achievement of ideal human unity the problems confronting human society can be resolved.*

Though Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Sri Aurobindo, belong to different periods of history, striking similarities are found in their thought. Both the thinkers believed in the evolution of state at certain stage of history. However, while Hegel's analysis of his contemporary civil society led him to search for an alternative system which he found in the concept of state, Sri Aurobindo's analysis led him to find the concept of ideal human unity. Interestingly, though both the thinkers agree on the evolutionary principle in the development of human society, they widely differed regarding the culmination of this evolutionary process.

While for Hegel the state is the highest embodiment of reason on earth, for Sri Aurobindo it is a mechanism that fulfills some basic needs of human life. While for the former state is an end in itself, for the latter it is a means to ideal human unity. Notwithstanding dissimilarities, however, there are convergences in their approaches as far as they investigate the concept from an evolutionary perspective, though the crucial difference is that while Hegel's idea of evolution stops at the appearance of state, Sri Aurobindo's concept of evolution goes further. Both the thinkers believed in the historical necessity for the rising of state in human society, but differed on the modalities of the course of historical development and its culmination. As profound thinkers as they are and having contributions to diverse fields of learning such as history, metaphysics, psychology, culture, etc. the current paper would confine its scope in analyzing some aspects of the political philosophy of Hegel and Sri Aurobindo and attempt a comparison.

The analysis in the paper would have the following course. The first section would deal with the background of Hegel and his concepts of civil society and state and their evolution. The second section would focus on Sri Aurobindo's concept of state and ideal human unity. The third section makes a comparison between the political ideas of both the thinkers. The final section summarizes main conclusions of the paper.

## II

Like every political philosopher Hegel (1770-1831) was the product of his time. The fragmentation of German empire, the defeat of Germany by France, prevailing corruption and degradation in his contemporary society, the French Revolution of 1789, the industrial revolution in England, and German enlightenment profoundly shaped the ideas of Hegel. Further, his deep understanding of Greek civilization made Hegel a passionate lover of Greek success in art, culture and politics. While the Greek society produced an ethical variety with its universal character, Hegel argues, the subsequent periods in history lacked that temperament. Similarly in his studies of religion, Hegel was a passionate lover of Christianity and a critic of Judaism. His main scorn against Judaism was that it separated man from god, particular from universal; making the universal totally alien to particular<sup>1</sup> and hence, forfeiting the individual to develop a universal outlook. This distinction has been discussed in detail in later pages. As we shall see, some of the major concerns that engaged Hegel, during his academic career at Jena and afterwards, were reunification of Germany, addressing the problems of poverty and alienation which are byproducts of bourgeois society, and providing order and harmony in a rather chaotic society.

Three major influences on Hegel include: Schiller's philosophy of dichotomy, the French Revolution that championed human freedom, and James Steuart's theory of historical development.<sup>2</sup> From Schiller, Hegel learnt to appreciate Greek universalism, and learnt how the universalism degraded into particularism<sup>3</sup> in later periods, thus resulting in disorder and deformities. But while Schiller advocated for aesthetic education for the revival of universal spirit in the contemporary society, Hegel developed the concept of state which, for him, can bring ultimate unity and harmony. Because, Hegel argues, state is the highest embodiment of reason on earth and the historic progression from the Greek civilization to the current phase of turmoil is already pre-ordained in the movement of spirit.<sup>4</sup> In the coming of the state, individual finds his supreme realization as it represents highest ethical order. From French Revolution and its aftermath development, Hegel learnt that absolute freedom is neither good for individual nor for society. The revolution which saw the overthrow of monarchy, within a very short span of time, again witnessed dictatorship at the hands of Napoleon. Hegel expressed pessimism as unregulated, unrestricted freedom which results in extreme individualism of laissez faire variety. From Steuart, Hegel learnt that the evolution of human history can be studied by investigating into its economic development through various phases. Hence, along with Steuart, Hegel believed that the growth of human society from feudalism to bourgeoisie society was a rational development of economic potentialities of human society. It was a historical necessity.

Throughout his philosophical writings, especially in Philosophy of Right, in which Hegel

dwell at length about the concept of state, one finds the persistent duel between the concepts of particularism and universalism. The movement of human society, for Hegel, is from particularism to universalism. While family, the basic unit of society, represents particularism, state represents universalism, and civil society<sup>5</sup> (the domain of interplay of economic forces) mediates between the two not as a kind of arbiter, but as a transition. Hegel found the trace of universal ethical life in Greek society but it was in a rudimentary scale, hence it had to pass through the medieval ages to reach the present phase of turmoil in which the antagonism between particularism and universalism has reached its pinnacle. Somewhat akin to Rousseau<sup>6</sup>, Hegel argues that the evolution of private property and technology brought huge disparities among individuals in a civil society.

Hegel, in his analysis, stresses both positive and negative aspects of civil society. From positive point of view, civil society and its mechanisms such as corporations, guilds, legal system, etc. brings individuals to a wider, universal platform. It provides a kind of interface among various individual interests from a broader perspective. However, the mechanisms are so devised not to promote common good, but basically to protect individual interests. The negative aspects of civil society outnumber its positive aspects. First, it brings poverty to a large scale. Due to invention of technology and money economy the disparity between poor and rich grows. Second, and subsequently, it brings alienation. The labourer is alienated from his product and totally depends on the vagaries of market for subsistence (Karl Marx further carried the Hegelian concept of alienation in his own way). Though there are various mechanisms devised by civil society, which Hegel witnessed in England, such as charity, public service and justice system, none of these has been successful to address poverty and alienation of the labourers. For Hegel, it is the state which can bring ultimate harmony and unity among individuals in society. Civil society is deficient in this respect as it is mechanic and promotes class antagonism by making rich richer and poor poorer; after all it is based on economic equations prevalent and suitable to market.

State, for Hegel, is the highest achievement of human civilization. It is the highest embodiment of spirit. In the movement from particularism to universalism, the human society moves in a dialectic fashion, which Hegel calls a historic necessity. The human intellect, which is rational in character, finds its culmination in the manifestation of state, which is absolute, ethical and universal. In this context, Hegel criticizes the Kantian concept of transcendental idealism which says that the absolute or the universal is beyond the comprehension of human reasoning. For Hegel, it is neither possible nor desirable to create an impenetrable wall between the individual and the universal, because in the movement of reason, in which reason unfolds itself in dialectic method, state is its highest embodiment. In

this Hegelian style, the movement from particular to universal can be seen manifested in the movement from family to civil society and thence forward to state. For Hegel, reason or will is eternal, universal, self-conscious and self-determining.<sup>7</sup>

In the family the individual is integrated with the values upheld by the group, though it retains the individual character. The members of family identify with each other but the identification stops there; it does not go beyond that. But, when the interests and needs of family surpasses and enters into the realms of civil society, the individual and group interests are more adequately fulfilled in a larger domain. Here, the individual identifies himself with a class, not with the whole community. Civil society can at most have a moral character, but not ethical, universal character. It is the state which is the ultimate manifestation of spirit. Applying Hegelian dialectic, family can be construed as thesis, civil society as anti-thesis and the state as synthesis. Interestingly, the Hegelian synthesis does not negate, or discard, the positive aspects of both thesis and anti-thesis. Both are sublated in the broader, totalistic and organic concept of state. For Hegel, state is like an organism, having its own personality. It is neither mechanic, nor human artifice, nor created by fortuitous will of god.<sup>8</sup> It is the highest manifestation of spirit, hence it is rational. Therefore the famous Hegelian rhetoric: real is rational and rational is real.

As state represents the highest ethical order, obedience to it must be the highest duty of individuals. Here Hegel introduces the concept of citizen. An individual can be a citizen when he obeys the state. By obeying the state, individual obeys the rational element in him, because state alone represents the highest rationality. Hence, for Hegel the law abiding citizen of the state can enjoy liberty to the fullest extent because it is only in the state that highest social order is possible and common good can be achieved. Therefore, Hegel's citizen is not only the right-demanding citizen of John Locke<sup>9</sup> but also law abiding citizen. Hence, while Locke allows revolution as a deterrent to state absolutism, Hegel rules out any such option as the state itself represents highest ethical order.

For Hegel unrestrained freedom is no freedom at all. In the civil society individual is like "the wild animal running hither and thither blindly and primitively".<sup>10</sup> Because as we see in Hegelian analysis, civil society, in which individual enjoyed unregulated freedom, leads to disorder and alienation, it is only in state that citizens subscribe to common good. Hegel disagrees with laissez faire economists such as Adam Smith who believes that the 'invisible hand of market' would bring harmony in society without any state intervention. For Hegel, society, or more appropriately the civil society itself is a battleground of interests. However, Hegel admits right to property in his scheme of things because property provides personality

to individual. But the individual character finds its zenith under the regulation of state.

For Hegel, the three main pillars of the state are the following: monarchy, bureaucracy and assembly of estates. It is the monarchy, or rather hereditary monarchy that brings overall unity in the state. The monarch is identified with the state, and by obeying the state the individual would obey the monarch, who symbolizes the whole community. The politically neutral bureaucracy, who inculcates the universal ethical principle, executes the regulations in an efficient and effective manner. The assembly of estates represents the interests of monarchy, bureaucracy and various social classes. Hegel's monarch may be equated with the modern heads of state. His concept of bureaucracy further elaborated later by Max Weber, can be equated to modern civil services. His assembly of estates can be equated with modern national assemblies.

Hegel's theory of state has been criticized on many grounds. His absolutist concept of state was allegedly used by the Fascist regime of Germany to draw legitimacy.<sup>11</sup> Marx criticized Hegel's concept of dialectic idealism and state. For Marx, state is not the highest embodiment of reason; rather it is an executive committee of bourgeoisie to exploit the proletariat. The post-modern thinkers such as Derrida criticized Hegelian theory as teleology.<sup>12</sup> But it would not be possible to ignore the contribution of Hegel to political philosophy. His method of dialectic, concept of state, civil society, alienation bore far reaching implications on later developments in political theory as well as practice.

### III

Sri Aurobindo (1872-1950), the twentieth century thinker, grew up in the background of Indian freedom struggle against British colonialism. Hence, expectedly his idea of state, scattered over his numerous writings but especially in the *The Ideal Human Unity*, was moulded by contemporary developments. The subjugation of the Indian subcontinent under the foreign domination motivated him to become members of secret societies such as Indian Majlis and Lotus and Dagger during his Cambridge days, and later to advocate extremist methods including violence to free India. Western liberal tradition in Sri Aurobindo was highly suffused with Indian spiritualism.

Sri Aurobindo, like Hegel, believed in the evolution of human society. While Darwin's theory of evolution studied the evolution of human being from the biological perspective, Sri Aurobindo almost applied this theory though from a different angle. In the evolutionary process, for Sri Aurobindo, human society appeared in a later stage, the first stage being the physical world of matter and the second stage being life. The manifestation of consciousness is the highest manifestation so far of this evolutionary progression. Only the human being, the

possessor of consciousness, emerged on the ground as the basic unity of society.

Sri Aurobindo makes a distinction between the concepts of state and nation. For him, the state represents the transition of society from the infrarational organic stage to the rational stage. It attempts to bring about an organic unity of the aggregate people's political, social and economic life through centralized administration. The need for compactness, single-mindedness and uniformity to promote security and strengthen national defence is sought to be fulfilled by the state-idea. For Sri Aurobindo, "the state has been most successful and efficient means of unification and has been best able to meet the various needs which the progressive aggregate life of societies has created for itself and is still creating ".<sup>13</sup> The state is only an outward form, a convenient machinery to enforce unity and uniformity. But on the other hand, it is the nation which is the living unity of the aspirations and powers of its peoples. A common race-origin, a common language, a common culture and geographical unity may be its elements but, for Sri Aurobindo, it is basically a psychological unit with a soul of its own. Man by nature seeks the association of his fellow beings. The social life of individuals begins within the family. After the family comes, in the evolutionary process, the tribe, then the clan, the community and then the nation. But Sri Aurobindo believes that the nation idea is not the terminus of the march of the human civilization because there is a drive in Nature towards larger agglomerations and this drive can lead to the final establishment of the largest of all and the ultimate union of the world's people.<sup>14</sup>

Though the concept of nationalism emerged in the 18th century, the concept did not have wider significance in the initial period. It did not emerge as an evolutionary consciousness but from some kind of expediency, from a geographical and historical necessity. In the beginning, it emerged as a secondary or even tertiary necessity which resulted not from anything inherent in the vital nature of human society but from circumstances.<sup>15</sup> However, the feeling of being in nation- this psychological feeling-brings unity among people of different shades of opinion. It makes the principle of unity in diversity possible. The concept of the nation-state has the following utilities. First, it brings the sense of unity among people. Second, it helps in developing a collective consciousness leading to collective goals in national affairs. Third, it bears in itself the seed towards a larger formation, towards a greater unity of human beings across national divides.

The characteristic feature in Sri Aurobindo's concept of nationalism is that he makes a distinction between 'national ego' and 'nation-soul'. While national ego, i.e. a vague sense of group subjectivity, is reflected in national idiosyncrasies, habits, prejudices and marked mental tendencies, nation-soul embodies a deeper awareness of group subjectivity.<sup>16</sup> Hence, while national ego is a barrier towards larger unity of mankind, nation-soul has in itself a tendency

towards larger agglomerations of mankind. There are two aspects of national ego. It may be aggressive or expansive and defensive. Sri Aurobindo cites German imperialism as the case of aggressive aspect of national ego and British imperialism as the case of defensive aspect of national ego.<sup>17</sup> Wherever there is domination of national ego, there is a tendency in part of national leaders to profess supremacy of their nation and to proclaim their right to expand into other territories, thus leading to imperialism. Whether it is British or French or German imperialism, an inherent urge has become prominent in part of those nations to assert supremacy and domination over other nations and cultures.

It is interesting to note here many Western scholars followed the line advocated by Sri Aurobindo. Though Sri Aurobindo advocated for moderation of the concept of nationalism on the eve of the first World War, the same line of argument was followed by some Western scholars on the eve of the second world war. For instance, Clarence Streit's book *Union Now* and W. B. Curry's book *The Case for Federal Union* were full of pleas for moderation of the concept of aggressive nationalism, especially practised in Germany under the leadership of Hitler. Curry appealed nations to come out of their narrow grooves to make the idea of federal union possible. For the survival of the civilization, Curry argued, "the groups which we call nations should become like other groups, less fierce, less exclusive, less aggressive, less dominating, admitting allegiance to, and submitting to some measure of control by the community consisting of mankind as a whole."<sup>18</sup>

For Sri Aurobindo, nationalism is evolutionary in nature and its evolution towards a higher form of synthesis of mankind is mandated in its very nature. There is always an urge in nation idea even in a way to 'destroy it' in the larger synthesis of mankind. In the growth of human civilization nationalism is an intermediary stage towards higher forms of union, transcending narrow national boundaries. The nation idea finds its consummation in the development of ideal human unity. But, Sri Aurobindo makes it clear that the nation idea must be developed to its full before any possibility of formation of world union arises. Sri Aurobindo in his book, *The Ideal of Human Unity* explicates the possibility of emergence of some kind of union. For him, the exact name does not matter, whether it be world union or federation or state, what matters is the highest possible achievement of human civilization in which different nations and different cultures live in peace and harmony, as in one family.

Hence, Sri Aurobindo's vision of Indian nationalism and spiritualism has not been confined to narrow revivalism, as some Western scholars would have us believe. Sri Aurobindo's nationalism is neither aggressive nor expansionist as he has never advocated for the practice of these kinds of negative nationalism as one finds in Nazi variety of nationalism. Rather Sri Aurobindo's nationalism is predicated on the subtle form of ideal human unity. For him nation-

state system is not the zenith of the formations of human civilization, rather it is an intermediary phase for the ultimate ideal human unity. Even when he demanded complete independence for India and for the achievement of that purpose when he advocated for spiritual nationalism, having four-fold dimensions: swadeshi, swaraj, boycott and national education, it was in no sense aggressive in Western sense, rather it could be considered as a high-pitch call for arousal of national consciousness for India's freedom. And India's freedom was deemed necessary, as Sri Aurobindo envisaged, because India with her spiritual crown could serve a beacon light to other nations.

Sri Aurobindo developed the idea of religion of humanity to make his scheme of ideal human unity possible. The underlying basis of this religion is not any kind of dogma or exclusivist tenets or ideas, rather three supreme values of liberty, equality and fraternity. This supreme social trinity or 'three godheads of soul' can provide a stable basis for an emerging world order based on peace and harmony. But these three supreme values cannot develop and transform the world until the mankind rises to the occasion and cultivate them in habit, thinking and ways of life. Sri Aurobindo believes none of these values has really been won in spite of all the progress that has been achieved. He writes: "The liberty that has been so loudly proclaimed as an essential of modern progress is an outward and mechanical and unreal liberty. The equality that has been so much sought after and battled for is equally an outward and mechanical and will turn out to be an unreal equality. Fraternity is not even claimed to be a practicable principle of the ordering of life and what is put forward as its substitute is the outward and mechanical principle of equal association or at best a comradeship of labour."<sup>19</sup>

Liberty, equality and fraternity- all these values are always in conflict with each other, unless transformed with spiritual light and knowledge. Liberty on its own emphasizes on human freedom, some kind of laissez faire, thus neglecting the principle of equality. Similarly, the principle of equality on its own contradicts the principle of liberty as it emphasizes on equality of human beings at the cost of individual freedom. It can be said, Sri Aurobindo brings here into focus the never-ending debate in political theory concerning the principles of liberty and equality. He argues that two apparent contradictory principles can be reconciled with the higher principle of fraternity. But this reconciliation appears unworkable in the present scheme of things which put emphasis on mere appearance and mechanical order. Because fraternity as it is implied in its present working means just formal coming of nations together or just some kind of formal unity.

The religion of humanity, as envisaged by Sri Aurobindo, is the true embodiment of the three supreme values. It harmonizes all these three values in a proper perspective. In fact,

liberty in its true sense is not exclusive. Freedom not only implies 'freedom to' but also 'freedom from'. Similarly, equality in its true sense not only implies equitable rights but also equitable duties. And this harmonious working of the principles of liberty and equality is possible only when the spirit of brotherhood encompasses all the human hearts. Only then the ideal for human unity would emerge not as a distant possibility but as an imperative need of mankind. Because, Sri Aurobindo rightly sees, with the passing of time nations have come closer to each other. The major contributions made by the means of 'science, commerce and rapid communication'<sup>20</sup> in this regard cannot be denied. As the achievements of science and technology transcend national boundaries, similarly the religion of humanity transcends all narrow national mentalities and all those forces that confine human mentality to rigidities.

Hence, the world union as Sri Aurobindo envisages would not be rigid and dogmatic. It would not succumb to hegemonic ambitions of any particular nation because a true world union would be based on the "principle of equality in which considerations of size and strength will not enter".<sup>21</sup> It would give equal respect to diverse cultures and patterns of life. And, it would, in the language of Crossing the Divide: Dialogue Among Civilizations,<sup>22</sup> recognize the principles of equality and distinction, not domination and disintegration. It would not allow big, powerful nations to usurp the rights of other nations in violation of the basic principles of the world body, as the recent case of Iraq invasion by the US displays. This world order would be akin to a rich tapestry in which different shades of colour are beautifully placed in their own places or like an ornament in which different varieties of precious stones are placed in their requisite order.

#### IV

Hegel and Sri Aurobindo believed in the evolutionary progression of human society. Both also believed in the historical necessity of such a progression. Both were champions of their age, i.e. while Hegel hoped for German unification and restore law and order, and devised his philosophy accordingly, Sri Aurobindo advocated extreme methods for independence of India, which for him was a spiritual necessity for the whole mankind. Similarly, both Hegel and Sri Aurobindo expressed high regards for traditions: while Sri Aurobindo revived the system of Vedic philosophy in his writings, the reunification of Germany and the revival of 'German spirit' was a major concern for Hegel. While Hegel advocated for measures such as efficient bureaucracy, monarchy and assembly of estates for the achievement of universal ethical order, Sri Aurobindo believed in national education and integral yoga as methods to revive the Indian spirit towards the final accomplishment of ideal human unity.

However, the differences seem to outnumber the similarities in their approaches. The

following are the major differences:

First, while for Hegel state is the highest embodiment of rational spirit, for Sri Aurobindo it is not even rational, but infra-rational. To the Hegelian dialectic which finds state as the highest ethical order, Sri Aurobindo posits state as an evolution which possesses rationality at a very rudimentary stage.

Second, Hegel's state is organic and it has its own personality, but for Sri Aurobindo it is a machine, based on force. For Hegel, state is ethical and absolute in its character; for Sri Aurobindo it is a machine, though necessary, to address some basic needs of individuals in society.

Third, Hegel advocated for an unflinching obedience to state. Sri Aurobindo advocated for transcending the state mechanism towards ideal human unity. Hegel believes that in the state individual finds his highest achievement because for him state is 'freedom actualized'. For Sri Aurobindo state is an insufficient machinery to provide individual true freedom. This difference can be described as a major departure of Sri Aurobindo from Hegel. Hegel's rationalism, or march of the spirit, stops at the state formation; Sri Aurobindo's rationalism marches farther, transcends the state concept, and then moves towards ideal human unity.

Fourth, while Hegel's metaphysics is narrow, Sri Aurobindo's metaphysics is broad. Hegel is considered as a philosopher with original endowment, Sri Aurobindo is considered as a philosopher, seer and yogi. Sri Aurobindo believes in the concept of supramental being,<sup>23</sup> which, he believes, is on the anvil in the next phase of evolution of human society. Hence, while Hegel stopped at the rational being and rational state, Sri Aurobindo talked about suprational being and ideal human unity.

Also, the state as conceptualized by Hegel may not be able to resolve the class antagonisms arising out of the civil society. Karl Marx has become the harshest critic of Hegel in this context. As the current trends of state formulation reveal, the antagonisms between various identities have further been ensconced within state system. Going a step further, it can be argued in the Hegelian terminology that the antagonistic nature of civil society, instead of getting subdued in the state, has engulfed the state as we witness recent developments in international politics such as attack on Iraq, and the manipulation of international mechanisms such as the United Nations for national economic interests. In this regard, Sri Aurobindo's concept of ideal human unity comes handy to provide succour to emerging international problems.

The Hegelian theory of state and civil society can be questioned on many empirical

grounds. How can the individual, so self-centred and selfish, come tamed under the state? The experience of Soviet socialist system brings to the knowledge that any rigid state control may lead to its collapse. Again, how can the individual, so immersed in the activities in civil society, obey another individual or individuals who are at the helm of affairs of the state? There is no guarantee that these individuals would not be guided by selfish motives. The Fascist rulers too have claimed to represent the state. Hence, the Hegelian notion that the state represents the highest ethical order may be questioned on the above grounds, though his analyses regarding its evolutionary character, the functioning and role of civil society bear historical veracity.

Sri Aurobindo from the very beginning refuses to ascribe the state highest ethical character because of its inherent fallacy. For him, the state cannot be the highest embodiment of spirit; it cannot be march of god on earth. It is a stage in the growth of human society. But it is not the final stage as in the case of Hegel. Sri Aurobindo expressed optimism that when the 'supreme social trinity', i.e. liberty, equality and fraternity would be embedded with a higher spiritual meaning, only can then the miseries rising out of state machine be resolved. However, Sri Aurobindo like Hegel can be criticized on the same ground of teleology.<sup>24</sup> Like Hegel he also applied the same evolutionary principle though with different objectives. Hence, his concept of supra-rational society can well be questioned on empirical ground.

## V

Hegel and Sri Aurobindo have made seminal contributions to political philosophy. Though Hegel is considered the architect of dialectic principle and introduced concepts such as civil society, bureaucracy and alienation with far reaching implications and which were later elaborated and modified by Marx, Weber, Frankfurt School, etc, Sri Aurobindo's most important contribution to political philosophy remains with the fact that he introduced spiritual principle in the domain of political theory and gave concepts such as ideal human unity.

Hegel's major source of inspiration was Greek philosophy, Judaism and Christianity, French Revolution, Industrial Revolution, and thinkers such as Kant, Fichte, Schiller and Steuart. Sri Aurobindo highly derived from the Indian culture and tradition. His western liberal education, coupled with Indian metaphysical system, guided his political thought. Like Hegel who strove to bring unity in Germany, Sri Aurobindo worked to free India from foreign yoke, though the methods of both varied. Hegel glorified war among nations but Sri Aurobindo talked about harmony among nations in his concept of ideal human unity. Both believed in the evolutionary principle, though both had different objectives while using this principle.

In contemporary political scenario, Sri Aurobindo's theory may appear more relevant than Hegel's. Hegel's glorification of war may not be tenable in the age of atomic weapons. Similarly, his theory of unconditional obedience to state may not be congruent with free rational spirit of individual. In this context, the 20th century proponents of globalization who advocate for 'demise of state' and the advocates of neo-liberal theory have already made enough dent into the Hegelian argument of state as representative of universal ethical order. In this background, Sri Aurobindo's concept of ideal human unity, which overcomes as well mitigates the shortcomings of state, may become more relevant. Though as a political philosopher Hegel might have more to offer in way of analysis, but as a visionary and seer Sri Aurobindo provided clue not only to the sufferings of individuals in the state but also to its solution.

#### End Notes

1. For Hegel god, spirit, reason, idea, universal, real and rational have almost synonymous connotations, and hence, are used interchangeably in his philosophy.
2. For a detail exposition of social and political philosophy of Hegel see, Cullen, Bernard, Hegel's Social and Political Thought: An Introduction, Gill and Macmillan, Bristol, 1979; and Verma, V. P., Political Philosophy of Hegel, Trimurti Publications Private Limited, New Delhi, 1974. Cullen has made a detail analysis of influences on Hegel. See Cullen, *Ibid*, pp. 25-37.
3. At the outset it can be mentioned here that one cardinal difference between particularism and universalism in Hegelian political philosophy is that while the former is individual-centric, and often motivated by selfish interests of the individual, the latter is concerned about common good, hence directed towards harmony and order in society. On this account Sri Aurobindo makes a radical departure from Hegel.
4. According to Hegel, from the point of view of the human actors, history is a union of irony and tragedy; from the point of view of the Whole It is a cyclic or spiral advance. See Sabine, G. H., *A History of Political Theory*, Oxford & IBH Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1973, p. 581.
5. Hegelian concept of civil society is different from other concepts of civil society, especially that of Antonio Gramsci. Hegel attributes mostly the economic significance to the civil society, in which individual economic interests are fulfilled in a complex market economy; Gramsci emphasizes its ideological role in a capitalist society.

6. However, the major difference is that while Rousseau was a critic of rationalism and talked about private property and family as a corrupting factor in human society, for Hegel the evolution of private property and family are necessary stages of development in the progress of spirit.
7. Dunning, W. A., *A History of Political Theories: Rousseau to Spencer*, Central Publishing House, Allahabad, pp. 155-156.
8. There is a long debate in political theory about the origin of state. While the Social Contract theorists such as Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau believe in the state as human artifice; the Divine Origin theorists such as Robert Filmer and Kautilya believe in the state as the creation of god; classical Marxists believe it as an instrument in the hands of bourgeoisie to exploit proletariat; Hegel belongs to the evolutionary school. Sri Aurobindo also belongs to the evolutionary school with his own interpretations.
9. Locke postulates inalienable natural rights which exist prior to state, but for Hegel, only in the state individual can have rights proper. He does not believe in the concept of natural rights which can overpower the dictates of state.
10. Quoted in Cullen, Bernard, op. cit, p. 85.
11. Sabine, op. cit, pp. 605 and 810.
12. For Derrida's criticism see, Singh, R. P., *Philosophy: Modern and Postmodern*, pp. 53-75.
13. Sri Aurobindo, *The Human Cycle, The Ideal of Human Unity, and The War and Self-determination*, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 1962, p. 618.
14. Ibid, p. 797.
15. Ibid, p. 743.
16. Mohanty, J. N., *Essays on Indian Philosophy, Traditional and Modern*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1993, p. 142.
17. Sri Aurobindo, *The Human Cycle*, op. cit, p. 700.
18. Curry, W.B., *The Case for Federal Union*, Penguin Book Ltd., Middlesex, 1939, p. 65.
19. Ibid, pp. 762-763.
20. Ibid, p. 617.

21. Sri Aurobindo, *The Human Cycle*, op. cit, p. 783.
22. Giandomenico Picco and et al, *Crossing the Divide: Dialogue Among Civilizations*, Shetton Hall University, New Jersey, 2001, pp. 1-252. This book, written under the auspices of the United Nations the theories of 'the Clash of Civilizations', developed by Samuel Huntington, and 'End of History', developed by Francis Fukuyama, and posits hope on the United Nations Organization for the resolution of problems confronted by nations. It envisages the emergence of the United Nations as some kind of 'global social contract', which recognizes the principle of equality and distinction among the nations (p. 69).
23. Sri Aurobindo's concept of supramental being is compared with Plato's concept of philosopher king and Nietzsche's concept of superman. However, the major difference between Sri Aurobindo and other thinkers in this context is that while for the former it is supra-rational, for the latter it is the culmination of rational (but it is rational, it does not transcend the rational principle). For a fuller exposition of Sri Aurobindo's concept of supramental being see Sri Aurobindo, *Life Divine*, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 1997.
24. Teleology implies explaining or analyzing an event in terms of its purpose.

## ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT :

### A STUDY OF THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN REHABILITATION OF PERSONS AFFECTED BY SARDAR SAROVAR DAM IN INDIA

Rashmi Shrivastava

*The benefits that are to result from the completion of the Sardar Sarovar Project make it suitable for sustainable development, but the issue of resettlement and rehabilitation of the affected people is a huge hindrance. Inspite of the multiple benefits accruing from the project the problems of the people displaced by it cannot be overlooked, therefore a rehabilitation policy has been charted out by the Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat Governments. This paper seeks to analyze the steps taken by the government to rehabilitate the people affected by the construction of the Sardar Sarovar dam. Until and unless these people are suitably resettled the development caused by this project cannot be termed sustainable.*

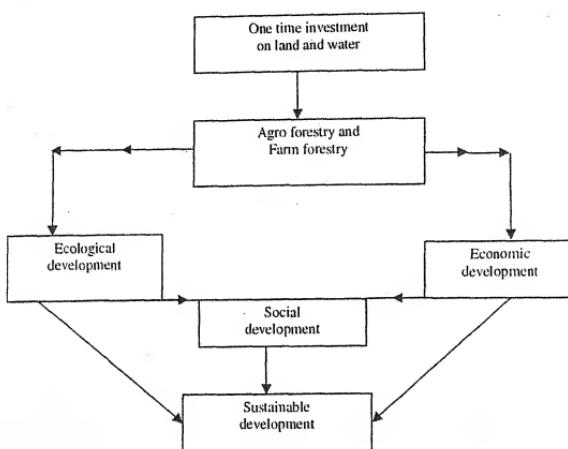
#### INTRODUCTION :

While most other new nations of Asia and Africa have generally been moving in the direction of greater authoritarianism, India has moved towards a greater democratization of power. Perhaps the most important aspect of the programme of democratization has been the establishment of universal adult suffrage, which has made the new institutions subject to popular control and thus caused a shift in power from administration to popular government.<sup>1</sup> Proposals for the reform of democratic society are not enough.<sup>2</sup> If the government bothers the problems of people and takes lead to solve them properly, then it will be more effective. Specially the mega projects are made by the government for development purposes. These developmental programmers are to be looked into a wider obligatory perspective of socio-cultural, socio – political and socio- economical environment.

The term 'development' was used and discussed till 1960. Afterwards the attention shifted to term 'sustainable development', which emphasized on total development instead of one-sided development. It was emphasized that care must be taken while carrying development so that it is not at the cost of destruction in other fields. Sustainable development should be future oriented where environmental problems should not arise. Also demographic balance must be maintained. Such development in one nation must also not be at the cost of any loss to other nation.

Fig. (1) gives an idea of the model of the sustainable development .

Fig. 1 Sustainable Development



In India, the leadership was taken by the Government itself for sustainable development during formulation and operation of Sardar Sarovar Project. In the nation's five year plans, importance was given equally to both development and the environment. In 1980, a committee was formed which recommended to the Central Government to create a separate department of environment. Protection of Environment Act 1986 was also passed by the government to protect the environment. It has been provided that under article 32 and 226 of the Constitution of India, the Supreme Court and High courts of India may accept the writ petitions related to constitutional matters. The petitions regarding environmental problems are generally filed under Article 21 of the Constitution. The judicial activism has been increased and a large number of public interest litigation cases have been disposed by judiciary. The issues of human rights have been also linked with these problems. The National Human Rights Commission has been set up through a Presidential Ordinance promulgated on 29 September 1993, which became an Act in 1994.<sup>3</sup> In May 1995, National Environment Tribunal Act has been passed where the disputes regarding environment are to be heard. The provision for the establishment of such tribunals has been added in part XIV A of the 42nd amendment bill 1976.<sup>4</sup>

The Directive Principles of State Policy, as contained in part IV of the Indian Constitution, covering Articles from 36 to 51, underline in Article 48 A that, "The State shall endeavour to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forest and wild life

of the country".<sup>5</sup> The Forty Second Constitutional Amendment Act has inserted Part IV A with Article 51 A having a set of Fundamental Duties. It says that, "it shall be the duty of every citizen of India to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife and to have compassion for living creature".<sup>6</sup> Similarly, in the seventh Schedule of the Constitution, concurrent list consists of the subjects like forest and protection of wildlife.<sup>7</sup>

The South Asia suffers the most though they constitute one fifth world population, subsists on one twentieth of land mass, bears a reasonable share of resources, ironically gets a profit share in world economy not even one percent. In India, an honest assessment of impact potential in many cases of the development projects are required and should be assessed on the ground of sustainable development. Most of the developing nations disregarded the plea for limited growth as made by the environmentalists. Without technological development and economic growth modernization is inconceivable. A mass society cannot come into being unless the means for mass participation, mass communication, mass transformation, mass production exist.<sup>8</sup> In India, the voluntary organizations of activists and affected masses themselves sprang up to fight the developmental projects prepared by the government. Certainly, there is utility of large dams. In 1950, the Bhakra Nangal dam in north India, which is called "the temple of modern India", was the veritable fountain head of India's Green Revolution, one of the very few economic success stories of the country. Punjab's prosperity and the fact that the country is now self-sufficient in food was largely due to this dam with the power that they generated, power that kept the tubewells running and the complex of irrigation canals that flowed from the dam.

It is universally acknowledged that every development project-be it a hydro-electric project or steel plant or atomic power station-is meant for the larger good of the people. The Tehri hydroelectric plant, one of the largest power projects of the country, began commercial operations on July 30, 2006. The plant which is expected to supply energy to Delhi, Uttaranchal, Rajasthan and Haryana, began operations after being embroiled in controversies for 35 years.<sup>9</sup> Independent India has witnessed myriad development project in different parts of the country in the last nearly six decades, but no project has stirred up such widespread controversy as the grandiose Sardar Sarovar project (SSP) on Narmada River.<sup>10</sup>

#### **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY :**

However, in the process of development, some people are bound to suffer. The object of this study is to analyse the actions taken by the government for rehabilitation of the people affected by the construction of Sardar Sarovar Dam. The significant feature in this case is the environmental stewardship of the concerned government. In democracy, the government is the representative of people and if it succeeds in guarding interests of the people by their proper rehabilitation and protecting their socio- cultural environment, then the role of the government in environment stewardship will be real and will definitely lead to sustainable development.

**NARMADA VALLEY PROJECT IN INDIA :**

The main river of central India is Narmada, which is known as the 'life line' of the state of Madhya Pradesh. It originates from Amarkantak in Madhya Pradesh. It is the fifth largest river in India and the largest which flows from east to west and into the Arabian sea. The total length of Narmada river is 1312 kms. The Narmada basin is about 98,800 sq. kms. of which 87% lies in Madhya Pradesh, 1.5% in Maharashtra and 11.5% in Gujarat. Some years before, the utilization of the river basin was hardly 4%. As per the recommended basin planning by the Narmada Water Disputes Tribunal, there are 30 multipurpose major projects, out of which 11 would be on the main river and 19 on the tributaries. Besides, 135 medium and 3000 minor irrigation schemes have been taken up. All the above proposed projects and schemes are in Madhya Pradesh except Sardar Sarovar Project which is in Gujarat and is under construction.<sup>11</sup>

**Sardar Sarovar Project :**

The project of the main big dam on Narmada River is called Sardar Sarovar project. There are other smaller dams which are called as Narmada Sagar project, Indira Sagar project, Bargi project etc.

The Sardar Sarovar project is an inter-state multipurpose project of the states of Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan, which is under construction in Gujarat. The tribunal has fixed the height of Sardar Sarovar dam as 455 feet. The reservoir extends up to 216 kms. In all, 245 villages are affected by submergence of Sardar Sarovar project of which 193 are in Madhya Pradesh, 19 in Gujarat and 33 in Maharashtra. The government has given its green signal to the project of Sardar Sarovar Dam on river Narmada which has been the largest ever displacement in India encompassing a total of 245 villages and about 70,000 tribals.<sup>12</sup> The Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh and the leaders of all parties of the state have desired reducing the height of the dam from 455 feet to 436 feet so that the submergence of land may be lesser in Madhya Pradesh.<sup>13</sup>

House-hold survey of submergent villages has been done through a questionnaire containing socio-economic information and information about land & property coming submergence. According to Madhya Pradesh Government, it is committed to a just and proper rehabilitation of the oustees of the Sardar Sarovar project.<sup>14</sup> The Government says that minimizing the adverse impact on the environment due to the construction of the dam has been one of the foremost objectives in the project planning process.<sup>15</sup> The government says that all precautions have been taken in planning the construction and operation of the project to ensure that the hazards of water-logging and salinity do not occur even in seemingly vulnerable areas of the command.<sup>16</sup>

Some salient features of the project are as follows: The project is planned to serve for irrigation in Gujarat. The annual irrigation is estimated around 1.90 million Ha. at 75% dependability. Drinking water problem of more than 7000 villages of Gujarat is also likely to

be solved by the project.<sup>17</sup> The aggregate installed capacity of hydrostations would be 1450 MW. Madhya Pradesh will get 57% of power generated. The project is planned in an inter-state framework with the regulated release of water from the Indira Sagar project located 320 kms. upstream in Madhya Pradesh. The entire command area of Sardar Sarovar project is in Gujarat. Sardar Sarovar project is perhaps the most intensively investigated project in the country. For examining the proneness of various parts of the service area to development of water-logging and salinity, detailed studies and surveys have been carried out.

#### **Analysis of the role of government for environmental stewardship**

Regarding the environment of Narmada Valley, the Madhya Pradesh Government viewed that the Narmada flows in hilly gorge from the origin to the Arabian Sea. The undulating hilly terrain in the lower submergence area of Sardar Sarovar project exhibits naked hills and depleted forests. Even small forest animals are very rarely seen because of lack of forest cover and water. The oft quoted symbiotic living with forests is a misnomer in this area because the depleted forests have nothing to offer but fuel wood. Soil is very poor mostly disintegrated, granite and irrigation is almost nil due to undulating & hilly land. Anybody visiting this area finds the people desperately sowing even in the hills with steep gradient. Only one ramified crop of mostly maize is sown and so there is no surplus economy.

Project affected persons (PAPs) inhabiting these interior areas find generous rehabilitation and resettlement packages as a means to assimilate in the mainstream in the valley. Therefore, the resettlement & rehabilitation of people whose habitat environment makes living difficult does not pose any problems and so the rehabilitation and resettlement does not pose a threat to environment. On the other hand, the water in the reservoir will definitely be a boon to the depleted forest and will enrich the environment.<sup>18</sup>

According to the decision of the Narmada Water Dispute Tribunal, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra shall acquire for Sardar Sarovar project under the provisions of the Land Acquisition Act 1894, all lands of private ownership and all buildings with their appurtenant land situated below the 455 feet of Sardar Sarovar and all interests therein not belonging to the respective states.<sup>19</sup>

#### **Rehabilitation policy for the oustees :**

The policy of the Madhya Pradesh Government regarding rehabilitation and resettlement of displaced persons of this complex project based on some broad principles for rehabilitation of displaced families:

- ◆ The aim of the state Government is that all displaced families as defined hereinafter, would, after their relocation and resettlement improve, or at least regain, their previous standard of living within a reasonable time.
- ◆ Reasonable compensation action would be determined for the lands, buildings and other immovable assets acquired. Similarly, a reasonable cost would be charged for

the lands that would be allotted at the new sites.

The families to be shifted to Gujarat would be provided agricultural land in that state. According to Secretary of Sardar Sarovar project, agricultural plots were readily available for allotment. The oustees could select the plot of their choice out of these. The oustees to be rehabilitated in Gujarat will be provided with maps of the sites where they would be given alternative plots.<sup>20</sup>

#### **Rehabilitation grant by Madhya Pradesh Government :**

Rehabilitation grant will be paid to each of the displaced families in suitable installments.<sup>21</sup>

The rehabilitation grant is related to present prices, and is linked to Government of India's "poverty line figure". Whenever it is revised by the Government of India, the amount of rehabilitation grants will also be correspondingly revised.

Gujarat shall also provide the grants and amenities to the oustees families from Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra who are willing to migrate to Gujarat. Gujarat is also directed to provide for rehabilitation and civic amenities as per directions.<sup>22</sup>

#### **Some important aspects of rehabilitation & resettlement :**

**Identification of PAPs :** House-hold survey of affected villages has been conducted. This survey incorporates information regarding the land, houses and other property coming under submergence and socio-economic status of the PAPs. This survey record has been updated in recent months by holding 'information camps' in affected villages. The lists of PAPs were published or read out in the villages in information camps and objections were invited. After scrutiny and after inquiry into these objections by the Rehabilitation Officers, the lists of PAPs, were finalized. In villages where activists were very active, the lists of PAPs, have been finalized by developing suitable contacts with a section of PAPs and by getting information from them regarding other PAPs, because had information camps been held in these 'opposition village' after doing wide publicity, then the activists from outside villages would have disrupted these camps. However, as the PAPs are contacted quietly, without wide publicity associated with the normal information camp, the rehabilitation & resettlement staff could get all the necessary information from the PAPs.

Any PAP who is aggrieved by any order of the rehabilitation officer has a right to appeal to the District Collector who shall decide the case within 3 months. Each identified PAP is given a 'submergence card', which gives information regarding the land, house and property coming under submergence.

**Consent for Resettlement :** Consent of the PAP for resettlement is the foremost & essential ingredient of successful rehabilitation & resettlement. Under normal circumstances, the free ascent of the oustees depends upon the prospective socio-economic & cultural environment of the resettlement site congenial to them. In Madhya Pradesh, majority of

submergence affects the village abadi partially and the agricultural land in the upper submergence areas will also be affected partially. The upper submergence areas are culturally different from the lower submergence areas which are situated on the border of Gujarat. Therefore, a PAP of lower submergence area finds more at home in Gujarat as compared to Nimad region of upper submergence area.

#### **Resettlement: the problem :**

Under Tribunal's award, the willing PAPs have to be provided land in the command area of the project. Accordingly, amongst those PAPs who have given their consent for settlement in Gujarat, 1,112 families has already been allotted agricultural land.

In addition to the above, 8188 PAP families have also given their written consent for resettlement in Gujarat and 16,616 families have given their written option for settlement in Madhya Pradesh. In addition to these PAPs, there are 8210 PAPs who have not given their options regarding the state of resettlement so far. These PAPs, have not exercised their options because of the following two reasons:

- ◆ They are members of the 'Narmada Bachao Andolan' and are against the construction of the dam.
- ◆ Though they are not against the dam, but have not given their options because of the fear of activists.

It is assumed that out of 8210 numbers of PAPs who have not given their options, 5936 are likely to resettle in Gujarat and 2274 in Madhya Pradesh.

For the rehabilitation & resettlement of Madhya Pradesh PAPs, in Gujarat, a day-to-day programme of allotment of agricultural plots and house sites is chalked out with the rehabilitation officers of Gujarat. On an appointed day: the rehabilitation officer of Madhya Pradesh goes to Gujarat and identifies the land and then on another appointed day he takes the PAPs for the land selection. The PAPs are free to exercise their choices. Once they select the land, the proposal is put up before the land purchase committee. After the land purchase Committee negotiates & finalizes the deal, on an appointed day again, the PAPs are taken to Gujarat for allotment of land and house sites. The final shifting is done after payment of compensation for house and other property.

Narmada Valley Development Authority had commissioned a socio-economic study of the tribal people in the villages coming under submergence. The report submitted by the commission is a comprehensive study of the tribal people. As per their recommendations, some actions need to be initiated :

- ◆ To facilitate the process of 'informal participation', the traditional leaders, i.e., the 'pujara', the 'bedwa', the 'patel', and the 'dehalas', should be involved at each step in the rehabilitation & resettlement activities.

- ◆ In order to orient the PAPs, awareness input pertaining to environment, health and community education must be organized at relocation sites.<sup>23</sup>

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS :

All the proposed projects and schemes are in Madhya Pradesh except Sardar Sarovar project which is in Gujarat. It is an inter-state multipurpose project of the states of Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

The availability of drinking water, irrigation facilities and hydroelectricity for industries will make this project useful for sustainable development. The objections for this project are mostly on the issue of rehabilitation of the affected persons. During my personal visit to the Narmada Valley Development Authority, Madhya Pradesh at Bhopal and Indore, the Government officials expressed their views that Government is committed to take care of all the oustees. Hard labour and efforts have been made from Government side to explain the situation of rehabilitation to the tribals. At each and every stage, the data has been collected and complete programme was made by the intellectuals, i.e. university professors and I.A.S. officers. Lot of money is going to be spent by the Government of Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat for rehabilitation.

There is other view that the Narmada valley project will transform the giant river Narmada of central India into a series of large pools and reservoirs, and destroy it as we know it for all time. Destroying too the livelihood of more than a million people, who must be evacuated to make way for the dam; submerging extensive areas of irreplaceable forest; slaughtering wild life on an unimaginably large scale; and destabilizing permanently the river basin's ecology, decidedly for the worse. Naturally, the decision to clear the project was greeted with dismay by environmentalists all over India and the world.<sup>24</sup>

There can be no doubt that getting uprooted is not a happy experience. The human problem arising out of displacement of such a populace requires great sensitivity and an empathetic approach towards planning and execution of their rehabilitation and resettlement. Their traditional identity and relationship with their social and physical environment suffers as village communities get delinked from traditional sources of livelihood affecting community life and causing social problems. The traditional tribal leaders do not seem to have been involved in the process of rehabilitation. Their symbiotic relationship with their habitat has cultural and religious significance and needs to be taken into account while recreating a harmonious environment at the new relocation site to avoid psychological insecurity.<sup>25</sup>

Some of the oustees have left their places which were allotted to them and the rehabilitation scheme. For the demand of justice the leaders of Save Narmada Movement have undertaken long marches and several writ petitions have been filed in various courts including the Supreme Court. The decisions of the Supreme Court guided the decisions of the Government.<sup>26</sup>

The Narmada Bachao Andolan's (NBA) plea to stop the height of the Sardar Sarovar dam from being raised to 121.92m has been rejected by the Supreme Court.<sup>27</sup> The Supreme Court order completes a cycle of response to the NBA over the past 20 years since its inception, during which time it has steadfastly opposed the completion of the dam under the Sardar Sarovar Project on one ground or the other, ranging from environment and resettlement issues to the human costs involved.

In the late- 1980s and early- 1990s, the NBA, under Medha Patkar, was able to convince the Central Government and the World Bank to withdraw from the project. But changed circumstances- an arid Gujarat pushing for water, rising demand for power and a growing project cost- have persuaded the courts to look for a middle ground. In 2001, the apex court declared that the construction should continue but only after a monitoring committee furnished reports on the progress of relief and rehab (R&R) at every stage.

Patkar reels out figures suggesting that the governments of the four concerned states- Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan- whether under the BJP or the Congress, have consistently reneged on the promise to provide land in exchange for irrigated, arable land that faces submersion once the dam height is raised. It has taken more than 40 years for the dam to reach its present height of 110m, but Patkar feels it is at the expense of over 3,20,000 people. The NBA leader also has strong reservations on the viability of the project.

But is there a way to quell the protests? "Three things," she says. "One, the Government should complete R&R according to letter and spirit of the Narmada Water Dispute Tribunal Award. Two, the dam height should not be raised beyond the present 110m as there is not much to be gained in terms of power and irrigation. Three, the CBI should probe R&R scams." The ball, clearly, is in the Government court. According to a news, the Sardar Sarovar dam will be raised to 121.82m by December 2006.<sup>28</sup>

There is no doubt that the huge hydro- electric project will benefit all the four States, providing easy access to drinking water, irrigation and power. This is commendable indeed, but the community and the governments must take due care of those in these four States who will lose their homes and livelihood when Narmada submerges their sweet homes and surroundings.

A Group of Ministers (GoM) was deputed by the Prime Minister in the first week of April 2006 to study the rehabilitation measures undertaken so far for the displaced in Madhya Pradesh.

The visit by the GoM showed in stark reality the hollow claims of rehabilitation. At one place out of 407 families only two accepted land; the land had to be dug ten feet deep to make it cultivable. Obviously, the Government had not conducted a proper survey and offered the land without consulting the oustees. The authorities did not bother to provide for sanitation, drinking water, sewerage, roads much less the facilities like hospital, water reservoir, school,

post office, etc., while allotting land.

There is no denying the fact that most of the rehabilitation sites developed by the State Government for the people displaced by Sardar Sarovar Project have not been occupied. Inability of the Narmada Valley Development Authority (NVDA) to develop all civic amenities at these sites could be a major reason for project affected families' unwillingness to move there. More than that they seem to be assured that their villages, counted among submergence areas, would never drown. NVDA Chairman said submergence area was determined on the basis of the worst flood in Narmada in 100 years.<sup>29</sup>

Many of the oustees complained that they had not been offered compensation. Where they got compensation, it was so meager that they couldn't purchase the area of land to which they were entitled. And there was the standing complaint that people had to pay bribes for receipt of cheques as compensation.

"You cannot ignore the voice of the poor in a development process. Development need not mean displacement. And you cannot have a handful of people take decisions without the participation of those affected and those asked to sacrifice all", said Ms. Medha Patkar while on a 20-day hunger strike in Delhi in April 2006.

We have been witnessing displacement of families in the wake of development project right from the 1950s. But till the anti-dam movement in the Narmada Valley, the displaced were treated as dispensable citizens. A study by the Indian Council for Social Science Research (ICSSR) found that 21.3 million people had been displaced between 1951 and 1990, to make way for mines, dams, industries and wildlife sanctuaries.<sup>30</sup>

The four beneficiary states have to be made accountable to the families who have sacrificed their all in order that their brethren are assured of a better harvest and greater access to drinking water and power.

The 'Hindu' in its editorial says that in a democracy, all developmental policies must go through this kind of vigorous and informed public debate to ensure that the voices of those most affected are heard.

Perhaps they (activists) do not have faith in the sincerity of Government. The trust in Government among the people is highly required along with the honest and sincere efforts of the Government. Only then the stewardship of the Government can succeed in this field.

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## URBAN GOVERNANCE AND POLITICS : A CASE STUDY OF TIRUPATI

M.A. Hussain

*The paper falls under the genre of Urban Local Government/Urban politics studies and is reflective of the growing concern with Local Government after the implementation of 74th Constitutional Amendment Act 1992, as representing the cutting edge of institutional administration and also the recent paradigm shift in Political Science with focus on institutional entities. The case study reported here focuses upon recent efforts by Tirupati Municipality and Tirupati Urban Development Authority to bring about Urban Development Schemes in Tirupati town.*

### THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE :

It is time that the political scientists and students of public administration closely study the structure of urban government and politics and suggest ways and means of streamlining it especially in the context of the urban problems and challenges that urban government is called upon to face. Urban administration refers to the activities that are performed by the local institutions established in urban areas. The quality and quantity of the services provided by the urban political institutions have a significant bearing on the health happiness and economy of our urban areas. As grass-roots democracies, these urban local institutions form an integral component of our democratic system and they are meant actively to reinforce the general tenor of the country's political liberalism<sup>1</sup>.

### INDIAN SCENARIO :

The political objective of urban local government should be the creation of a local administrative machinery which moves forward with dedication and commitment to civic welfare and which is always alive to public expectations and which will establish a lasting partnership between the people and the local administration in the endeavour to provide a citizen-friendly administration responsive to civic call<sup>2</sup>. This includes:

1. Providing information to all citizens about the essential services delivered by the urban local government and the procedure prescribed to avail themselves of those services;
2. Creating awareness among the public regarding the duties and responsibilities of citizens towards local government so as to play their role effectively and efficiently to enable urban local governments to function to the best possible satisfaction of the general public;
3. The creation of an official machinery to receive and redress public grievances within a fixed time frame;
4. Ensuring the active participation and co-operation of the public in maintaining a citizen-friendly administration.

While it is the responsibility of urban local governments to attend public call with

promptitude and efficiency duly maintaining the quality of service, it is the responsibility of citizens to play their role as citizens in every sense of the term towards local government.

For the inability of urban local governments to assimilate and fulfill the aspirations of tax payers with a positive outlook lack of foresighted planning and prudent fiscal management is criticized severely by one and all. Therefore, there is need to study the origin of the problem of inefficiency of urban local governments and work out suitable solutions to overcome these deficiencies in order to achieve the objectives set for the complete satisfaction of urban dwellers<sup>3</sup>.

#### THE STATE OF URBAN GOVERNMENTS :

Urban local bodies in our country have always been starved of the necessary finances to discharge their responsibilities. Most of the major sources of finances have been with the state or union government and the local bodies have had to depend on the benevolence of the higher levels of government. On the other hand, the list of statutory responsibilities of urban local bodies has increased. These have not been matched by a corresponding capacity building effort of the municipal level. The Municipal staff receives no training at any stage of their career and has to necessarily wade through the murky waters and hence, set their priorities themselves. Since most services involve intimate contact with the people on day-do-day basis (Water supply, Drainage, Sewerage, Roads, School etc.) corruption of every form is easily visible.

The administrative structures do not allow any scope of sharing power with the people and hence, any attempt on the part of the civil society to partake in the proceedings is resented as extra-constitutional influence or interference. There is little co-ordination between the other players in the government as well as the private sector, civil society and employees organizations.

A similar vacuum exists in the political sphere as also the quality of representation leaves a lot to be desired. The political parties work towards the sole objective of sharing power, and have little incentive to act otherwise. The urban local bodies are used only as a stepping stone to further their political ambition and as rehabilitation for the political goons used by the parties to indulge in corrupt electoral practices. This has resulted in the representatives owing their allegiance to the party bosses and little to the electorate<sup>4</sup>.

#### URBAN SCENARIO :

Urbanization in India is an expanding phenomenon. Urbanization has accelerated in the last three decades along with rapid increase in population. When recurrent droughts and cyclones and other natural calamities hit the rural people, they are literally pushed out into the cities and left on their own to seek work and eke out their livelihood. It is the push more than the pull factor that makes for multi-dimensional problems. India's urban population has been increasing due to natural growth and due to migration. In India, out of the total population of 1027 million on 1st March 2001, about 742 million (more than two thirds) live in rural areas

and 285 million in urban areas<sup>5</sup>.

The popular belief that India lives in its villages requires to be critically examined as urban growth has been enormous during the last three decades; 'there may come a day before long when it may be appropriate to say that India no longer lives in villages but lives in its cities and towns'.

In such an urban scenario, it is wisdom to give serious thought to proper and efficient urban governance and all possible steps are taken to set all the institutions connected with it in sound order. The most important needs of the urban areas of the country are (1) augmentation of drinking water supply, and (2) networking to improve civic amenities in all urban slums.

#### **FUNCTIONS OF URBAN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS :**

Ideally, urban local governments should constitute a training ground for state and central governments. It is not forfeited to think so. Many municipal councillors could rise to the membership of Assembly and Parliament. Urban local authorities may become pioneers in various fields of political and social activities. The powers of urban local government enable the local urban community to shape its affairs itself, according to local requirements. Urban local governments, if they have the will and determination, can work for social improvement and development with self-improved and regulated finances. The question before us is why urban local governments in India are unable to function as full-fledged local self government units and why are they not accountable to the people whose welfare is their ultimate object to fulfill? Urban governments being self governing units are closer to the people than state and central governments. They are obliged to be accountable for the implementation of welfare schemes to the citizens. Though the major policy initiatives are taken by the central and state governments, their implementation is mostly left to the urban local governments.

#### **PRINCIPLES AND ATTRIBUTES OF URBAN REFORMS :**

Mega urbanization and centralization of power were in full swing. We have to change the trajectory and should think of decentralization of power and empowerment of urban local bodies with adequate political power. If we fail to change, it would lead to extension. Continued strengthening of urban economy would lead to stable and sustainable society. Cohesiveness of community and faith in each individual should be ensured to strengthen urban local body. Moreover, power should be given to urban community for better civic governance. It should have legislative, judicial and bureaucratic powers. Urban Local Bodies did not have adequate powers. They could not decide who should cultivate and what should be cultivated. They did not govern actively due to insufficient financial resources and also ineffective urban leadership.

Turning now to the theoretical underpinnings of the study, while democracy is related to the form or arrangement of government, functionality, by contrast, is related to the processes of administration or, how actual operations take place within the administrative machinery. These two major concerns have conventionally formed local government reforms. Experience derived from practice over the years, and ideas of governance in general and sustainable

resource use in particular, have led to considerable elaboration of both principles and attributes of local government reforms<sup>6</sup>.

### The Habitat Agenda

The Habitat Agenda, adopted at the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements in 1996, launched the global campaign for good urban governance, signalling a new and a strategic approach to innovatively grapple with the urban situation worldwide. The campaign objectives are to increase the capacity of urban level governments in consultation with stakeholders, and especially to focus attention on the problems of poor, women, marginalized groups, children and youth, and religious and ethnic minorities. Good urban governance as per the Habitat Agenda is characterized by :

- o Sustainability
- o Subsidiarity
- o Equity
- o Efficiency
- o Transparency and accountability
- o Civic engagement and citizenship
- o Security

These norms are reinforcing and interdependent. Everywhere, urban local governance is expected to follow these norms in the course of pursuit reform initiatives.

### Decentralization

Another major thrust area in urban (or local) government reforms is 'decentralization'. Decentralization has, in recent times, received almost universal acclaim as a method of devolution of powers to bring about political stability (World's Development Report 1999, 2000). Particularly in the developmental context, decentralization has gained widespread popularity as a means of harnessing public power and civil society's collective energy.

Brian Smith in his authoritative work on decentralization has mentioned that in the Third World 'decentralization has long been regarded as a necessary condition of economic, social and political development' (1985). As he describes, democratic decentralization has been favoured for a variety of reasons:<sup>7</sup>

First : Decentralization has been found to be more effective way of meeting local needs than central planning.

Second : It has been particularly useful in meeting the needs of the poor, and in enabling the large majority of the rural poor, and also the urban poor, to participate in politics.

Third : Decentralization is said to have improved access to administrative agencies and acted as a corrective to people's apathy and passivity. In this process, it has helped secure people's commitment to development.

Fourth : Support for change through people's involvement, conflict reduction and penetration of rural (and also urban) areas have been made possible through decentralization.

Fifth : Decentralization has eased congestion at the centre, and provided more speed and flexibility during implementation.

Sixth : Local democracy has been satisfying for local subgroups, and it has thus strengthened national unity..

Seventh : In the old liberal political sense, decentralization has served the purpose of political education of the masses.

Finally : Local community support for government work has been possible through decentralization. Local governments have been able to harness local resources and self-help efforts for local development.

The urge for decentralization has come from many sources. First, it has been prompted by the need to deliver basic public goods like food, housing, water etc., as quickly as possible. Second, most people in developing countries live in distant places far from the national capital, that is usually located in far-off urban areas. Administration has to 'penetrate' the local areas and link these up with the nation as a whole. Third, in many countries social diversities manifest themselves in ethnic, linguistic and regional differences. Fourth, regional and local resources can be utilized for local development. Decentralization, therefore, facilitates local planning and development with the help of local resources. Fifth, decentralization has its own values in political and administrative terms. Politically, local participation in development activities, besides being resource intensive, paves the way for meaningful articulation of local demands. Planning thus becomes much more realistic and receives ready political support. From the administrative point of view, local capability to govern local areas increases through sustained participation of the people in local energies and enlist local support for development activities. In the process, the local community can steadily attain political and administrative maturity.

#### **JAWAHARLAL NEHRU URBAN RENEWAL MISSION :**

The Central Government in November 2005, approved the setting up of Rs.1 lakh crore Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission covering 60 cities with a million plus population. Billed as the most ambitious programme ever to be taken up for urban development in the country. The mission will be officially launched by Shri. Man Mohan Singh, the Prime Minister, on December 3rd ,2005; covering all State capitals and other cities considered important from a religious, historical and tourist perspective. The mission will give focused attention to the integrated development of urban infrastructure and services with special emphasis on providing basic services to the urban poor, including housing, water supply,

sanitation, slum improvement and community toilets<sup>8</sup>.

Setting up the mission was a commitment made by the Congress led United Progressive Alliance in its National Common Minimum Programme. The estimated Rs.1 lakh crore expenditure will be shared by the central government, state governments and urban local bodies. As per the proposal this combined investment in urban renewal will be made over the next 7 years. However, the central financial assistance has been linked to the implementation of urban reforms by state governments and urban local bodies. They will have to sign a memorandum of understanding of agreement with the central government giving an undertaking to implement the reform agenda. Fund releases will be linked to assessment of the implementation of urban reform agenda. The mission makes it mandatory for states and municipal bodies to undertake reforms with central funds. The centre will initially give a grant-in-aid of Rs.50,000 crores over 7 years. The states will have to raise the rest of funds from market borrowings. Initially 63 cities with over 1 million population and 23 cities of religious and tourist interest will be covered. Tirupati town is also included under this scheme.

#### **ANDHRA PRADESH LIKELY TO ADOPT 'KERALA MODEL':**

##### **Decentralization of Powers**

The State Government is examining the possibility of adopting the "Kerala Model" in decentralizing powers to the urban local bodies<sup>9</sup>.

It is studying a report submitted by a two-member team of officials from the Municipal Administration Department. The team had visited Kerala three months ago to study the implementation of 74th Constitutional Amendment Act. According to the report, the hallmarks of the system in Kerala are people's participation, transparency and accountability. Kerala became a role model in the country with the transfer of powers, functions and responsibilities to the local bodies.

In Kerala, one-third of the plan grant-in-aid of the state has been earmarked for local bodies in the 10th five year plan. For the distribution of the plan grants, a clear formula has been evolved and the share of each local body is mentioned in the State Budget document.

Municipalities in Kerala do not supply water. The Kerala Water Authority executes and maintains all the water supply schemes, besides distributing water in all municipalities and corporations. About 13 departments like agriculture, animal husbandry, social forestry, small scale industries, housing, education, public health and sanitation, social welfare, eradication of poverty, development of SC/ST, sports and cultural affairs and natural calamity relief have been transferred to municipalities. The services being extended by the municipalities include infrastructure facilities, maintenance of buildings and construction of new buildings, supply of furniture and computers, school laboratories and payment of water and electric charges. Municipalities are permitted to utilize 10 percent of the maintenance grants sanctioned by the government to these departments for purchase of medicines to hospitals.

However, staff working in the departments transferred to municipalities continues to be under the control of the parent department and their salaries are also paid by the parent departments. The team found that there was dual control of the parent department and the municipality in the performance of the functions of the departments transferred. It also found that District Planning Committees (DPCs) have been constituted in all districts with 15 members of whom, 12 shall be elected from the elected members of the panchayats and municipalities in the district. Every municipality has to prepare an annual plan with the plan grants sanctioned by the government and with its own funds and get it approved from the DPC.

In a democracy of continental dimensions, governance comprises the complex mechanisms, processes and institutions through which people articulate their interests and basic needs, mediate their differences and exercise their rights and obligations. Good governance means rule of law, good policy-making and implementation, transparency, accountability and above all people's participation. It means strengthening of the instruments of administration; and much more so, the institutions that represent it have also to reach out to the common people in India.

Good governance is the most important thing that has happened in this century according to Noble Laureate Amartya Sen. The present Government's commitment to Administrative Reforms is highlighted and is expected to provide a stable, honest, transparent and efficient government. We are now at the dawn of the 21st century. In the new millennium, the government would need to reinforce itself to become citizen-friendly. Greater delegation and decentralization of authority and responsibilities have been brought about by the 74th Constitutional Amendment. In this reckoning urban institutions have a critical role to play and vital responsibilities to discharge. But this has, sadly yet truly, remained an unfinished agenda. These promises have not yet been kept as of now. As per the 1991 Census, 3,72 urban local bodies and 72 Municipal Corporations exist for 3,609 towns and cities but their power is limited by their subordinate status.

### **Historical Background**

Lord Mayo's Resolution of 1870 was a landmark as it recognized local self-government as an "effective machinery of administrative devolution" and financial decentralization. Lord Rippon's Resolution in 1882 and a new legislation in 1884 enlarged the scope of Municipal Administration in India. The 1884 legislation was in operation till 1932. From 1933 onwards, the dichotomy between deliberative and executive wings of Municipal Government became distinct and clear. The Municipal Chairman emerged as the political executive while the executive authority was vested in the hands of the Municipal Commissioner. This continued till the dawn of Indian Independence in 1947.

### **Position of Urban Local Government Institutions prior to the passage of 74th Amendment Act**

The Municipalities in AP were functioning in accordance with two distinct Municipal

Acts till 1965. The Municipalities in the Coastal and Rayalsaeema regions were influenced by the policies of Madras Presidency which was under the direct control of the British Government. The Municipalities of the Telangana Region were established as per the policies of the Nizam of Hyderabad. The Municipalities of these two regions at the time of formation of AP were governed by two sets of Acts i.e., The Madras District Municipalities Act of 1920 and the Hyderabad Municipalities Act of 1956. Later, the two Acts merged together under one unified act called AP Municipalities Act of 1965. This Act was amended again in 1971 and the following changes took place in the administration of the Municipalities.

- a) The Executive Committee was abolished.
- b) The Secretary was designated as the Commissioner.
- c) The Commissioner was given the functions of the Chief Executive Officer, and
- d) The institution of Alderman was abolished.

As per the changes brought out in the Municipal Act of 1986, the T.D.P Government lowered the age of voter from 21 to 18 years. For the first time, direct elections to the Chairmanship were introduced. The photo identity card system was introduced in 1987 Municipal elections.

#### The New Set up

The 74th Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992 came into force from June 1, 1994. As per the new Act, Nagar Panchayats, Municipal Councils and Municipal Corporations were constituted. Ward committees were constituted within the territorial area of municipality having a population of 3 lakhs and more. Further, a District Planning Committee was also established to consolidate the plans jointly prepared by the Panchayats and Municipalities in the district and to prepare a draft development plan for the whole district. There are at present 7 Municipal Corporations, 108 Municipalities and 14 Nagar Panchayats and one Cantonment Board functioning in Andhra Pradesh.

#### Classification of Municipalities in Andhra Pradesh

According to Section 3 of A.P. Municipalities Act, the State Government is empowered to declare a local area as a Municipality with a population of not less than 25,000. The State Government has classified the Municipalities into five grades on the basis of annual income and population. The following table provides the details of the classification of Municipalities.

#### The New Pattern-A Critique

In Andhra Pradesh, to give effect to the 74th Constitution Amendment Act, the A.P.Municipalities Act, 1965, was amended in 1993. The State Election Commission was constituted in 1994 and elections were held in 1995. The Finance Commission was constituted which has initiated the process to study the resource needs of the urban and rural local bodies

in AP. The New Act provides for uniformity in the structure of urban bodies in the country, reservation of seats for women and other disadvantaged sections of the society, and also provides for regular elections to the Municipalities/Corporations<sup>10</sup>.

| S.No | Grade           | Income Limit                                                                      | No of Municipalities in AP from 15.9.98 (up to 14.9.98) |
|------|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 1    | Selection Grade | Annual income of Rs.4 crores and above                                            | 7(5+2)                                                  |
| 2    | Special Grade   | Annual income of Rs.3 crores and above but less than Rs. 4 crores                 | 9(10-1)<br>(10-2+1)                                     |
| 3    | First Grade     | Annual income of Rs. more than 2 crores but less than Rs.3crores                  | 16(17-1)                                                |
| 4    | Second Grade    | Annual income of Rs. More than one crore but not more than two crores             | 35(35)                                                  |
| 5    | Third Grade     | Annual income of Rs. One crore or less than(including one crore Nagar Panchayats) | 41(27+14)                                               |

Total 108

Empowerment of people and empowerment of the disadvantaged sections are the acclaimed advantages of the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments of 1992. We have not yet begun to capture and document the effects and limitations of empowerment by using the government machinery for social engineering. Constitutional Amendments may further freeze our spirit of enquiry and intellectual capacity to critically examine the existing approach and search for more effective harmonious and sustainable methods of 'empowerment' or upliftment of socially and economically disadvantaged groups. One would also expect that the next 20-25 years of working of local governments under the Constitutional Amendment Acts of 1992 will generate enough momentum behind forces in favour of a review of distribution of functions between Centre, State and local governments. The developments in local government institutions

in India have far-reaching effects on the institutions of governance of the country.

The 74th Constitutional Amendment Act is a major landmark in the progress towards democratic decentralization in the country. It envisages strengthening of urban bodies and enabling them to function as effective institutions of self governance in their respective jurisdictions.

#### Growth of Tirupati and Establishment of Tirupati Municipality

Though Ramanuja named the settlement as Tirupati, it was popularly known as Ramanujapuram. Two new hamlets known as Achyutaraya Puram and Srinivasa Puram sprang up on the north, east and west of the temple respectively during the rule of Vijaya Nagar Kings. The Tirupati village and the two hamlets Achyutaraya Puram and Srinivasa Puram soon merged into a fairly big township. According to 2001 Census, the population of Tirupati town constitutes 2.27 lakhs. The pilgrims and part of rural population is 0.83 lakhs. The total population constitutes 3.10 lakhs occupying fourteenth place in A.P<sup>11</sup>.

Tirupati was constituted into a third grade municipality by the Government of Madras on April 1, 1886, even though its population was less than 10,000. It is the biggest town in Chittoor District. In 1901 it was a class V town, and it was upgraded into a class III town in 1911. It was upgraded as an Class IIInd town during 1962 and into Class I during 1970. Again it was upgraded into a Special Grade Municipality when it completed 100 years of service in 1986. The jurisdiction of the Municipality is confined to the urban limits of Tirupati covering a geographical area of 16.21 sq.km. Out of 36 wards of Tirupati town, 18 were specifically reserved for weaker sections including two for women<sup>12</sup>.

The Municipality is performing various functions like repair of roads, lighting, sanitation, public health, conservancy, slum clearance, town planning, water supply for the entire tow, primary and secondary education apart from looking after day-to-day aspects of the Municipal Administration. The Municipal income is derived mainly from taxation, construction, execution of productive and non-productive works undertaken by the Municipality.

The long-term policy options for poverty alleviation at the town level, however, require a lot of political commitment and institutional stability. The 74th Constitutional Amendment Act 1992 not only restores the rightful place of the municipalities as democratic bodies, but also empowers them to work for slum improvement and upgradation as well as urban poverty alleviation and slum improvement in the XII Schedule of the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act. It has now become a function of Municipality to take steps for bringing down the incidence of urban poverty.

#### Urban Development Programmes Undertaken by Tirupati municipality

A number of urban development Programmes such as underground drainage system, development of slum areas, improvement of waterworks, widening of roads and construction of parks were undertaken by the Municipality. The Department for International Development

(DFID) U.K. is also providing financial assistance to the Tirupati Municipality for construction of roads, drainage system and other infrastructural facilities.

### Slum Improvement Project

The Tirupati Slum Improvement Project aims at an integrated development of 31 identified slums. The project envisages the provision of civic infrastructure as per the prescribed standards, improvement of health with emphasis on women and children, pre-school and adult education and income-generation activities including training skills for the youth. The project is to be executed as part of urban community development programme fully utilizing the execution expertise of the functioning and integrating all the different functionaries viz. technical, health, education, community development, slum leadership, NGO's etc. under one executive leadership thus affording scope for collective effort and feed back from micro to macro level<sup>13</sup>.

The Tirupati Municipality has spent Rs.37.22 crores recently for Underground Drainage Systems (U.D.S). For economically backward class's welfare under I.L.C.S Scheme, Rs.147.268 lakhs have been spent for construction of modern latrines. In addition to this, Rs.30 lakhs have been spent for construction of community latrines in Tirupati town and handed over the 'Sulabh' (an N.G.O) for maintenance and operations. The Tirupati Municipality is also getting financial assistance under Swarna Jayanti Shehari Rojgar Yojana (S.J.S.R.Y) and National Slum Development Programme (N.S.D.P) from both the Central and State governments.

### Water Supply

Tirupati is an important pilgrim centre in India. There are three major sources of protected water supply to Tirupati town. The Kalyani Dam, which is situated at a distance of 25 kms from Tirupati town, has a capacity to supply 30 lakh gallons of water per day. The Kalyani dam was constructed in 1978 with a total cost of Rs.560 lakhs. At present 29 lakh gallons of water is being supplied to Tirupati town. 27 lakh gallons of water is being supplied to the town through the existing old water scheme supply located at Mangalapuram pumping well and five bore-wells at Kalyani filter bed fitted with 10 H.P motors and all other sources including 620 hard bores and 167 power bores cover 6312 H.S.C and 400 public fountains for the entire population of this town. 75.00 lakh gallons of water is required for the town each day. Nearly 1/3rd of the town is not covered with Kalyani water supply distribution system. For such areas, water is supplied through bore-wells. In total, 56 lakh gallons of water is supplied to the town daily both from Kalyani Dam source and from bore-wells as against 75 lakh gallons of water required. To meet the growing demand for water supply due to influx of pilgrims to Tirupati town every day, Tirupati Municipality had undertaken new water supply scheme in 1999 with a total estimate cost of Rs.65-66 crores. Though Telugu Ganga canal, 75 lakh gallons of water is pumped from Srikalahasti to Tirupati town everyday. The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) and Tirupati Municipality jointly financed this project. The TTD paid Rs.49.98 crores towards the cost of this project.

The Government of India had launched in 1970s the IDMST Programme with the objective to improve the infrastructural conditions and economic growth of these towns through out the country by directing some of rural-urban migration to these smaller towns. However, the difficulties faced by various state governments in producing good quality strategy plans have shown that there is still a long way to go in the evolution of planned urban development. Under this scheme, the Tirupati Municipality constructed four shopping complexes, meat and fish markets at cost of Rs.414.17 lakhs.

### Public Health

For economy, efficiency and accountability, privatization of garbage collection was undertaken by the Municipality from 7th February, 1997 onwards. The private contractor has to undertake collection from all the garbage points in six zones of the town every day and he must obtain signatures from the notified houses in token of clearance of garbage. This contract system has proved efficient to clear off the balance of 55 metric tonnes of garbage and there is now visible improvement in the streets, lanes and by lanes. An amount of Rs.1.30 lakhs per month was allocated and a total cost of Rs.15.62 lakhs per annum was earmarked for this purpose<sup>14</sup>.

### Development of Roads

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) had taken up 13 roads in Tirupati town for development, such as widening the roads duly providing WBH & BT surface. In phase 1 of the program, the widening of roads and providing WBH were taken up in April 1996 and the same was completed. A sum of Rs.5 crores was earmarked for this purpose. The total cost for the road works was estimated at Rs.10 crores which excludes the cost of land acquisition. The TTD also completed 3 road projects of the R&B department as they were mainly meant for pilgrims visiting Govindaraja Swamy temple and Padmavathi temple at Tiruchanur.

The Tirupati Urban Development Authority and Tirupati Municipality took laying and widening of the roads jointly in Tirupati. With regard to the development of road from Tiruchanur to Pudi, work was undertaken by R&B department. Necessary funds were provided by the TTD. A number of urban development programmes like Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana Scheme (VAMBAY), Velugu, Urban Basic Services for the Poor (UBSP), Comprehensive Municipal Action Plan for poverty reduction programme and the Chief Minister's Empowerment of Youth (CMEY) are implemented in Tirupati town by the Municipality.

The various Five Year Plans have expressed concern for various urban development issues and urged for the need to deal with the rising problems. But, in the absence of a comprehensive perspective and policy which would consider economic development with urban development and strengthening of urban governance, many of the initiatives taken during the earlier successive plan periods appear like incoherent fragments of urban policy.

### The Tirupati Urban Development Authority

In order to solve the problems of urbanization of Tirupati town, the government of AP had constituted Tirupati Urban Development Authority (TUDA) in 1982. Areas covered by Tirupati Municipality and the Panchayats of Renigunta, Chandragiri and other nearby villages have been brought under the purview of TUDA with the hope that it will solve the two important problems viz. housing and water supply in Tirupati.

The jurisdiction of TUDA extends over an area of 848 sq.kms. TUDA executes development works in Tirupati municipal area and 89 villages. The main objectives of TUDA are as follows<sup>15</sup>:

1. Providing planned development for the citizens of Tirupati town and surroundings areas and to develop Tirupati as a model town by fostering economic significance of pilgrim town.
2. To nurture Tirupati town into a commercial centre.
3. To develop Tirupati town with better hygienic facilities.
4. To improve educational facilities in TUDA area.
5. To make Tirupati urban area as a beautiful tourist spot.

An evaluation of TUDA since its inception reveals that due to insufficient funds the development of Tirupati town and its surrounding areas have not improved substantially. Income generation has to be further enhanced so that TUDA can develop on its own to take up more developmental programmes.

The civic bodies of Tirupati could not do much to fulfill the requirements of citizens for better civic amenities. It should be noted that all the developmental works which were begun in the spheres of water supply, underground drainage system, road works and slum improvement could not takeoff without the prior sanction and financial assistance of both Central and State governments and Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams Board. It is rightly said that State government gradually eroded the powers of Municipal governments by establishing parallel agencies like Tirupati Urban Development Authority. The Municipality in Tirupati is unable to meet the day-to-day growing demands from the citizens for better civic amenities. Added to these civic problems the floating pilgrim population is adding to the civic problems by consuming the basic civic amenities meant for the citizens of Tirupati. Since Tirupati town happened to be one of the prominent pilgrim town in the country both the central and state governments should come to the rescue of this town by granting special funds so that the civic authorities could concentrate for better civic facilities to the local population and as well as to the visiting pilgrims to this town.

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## ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINERY FOR CONSUMER'S INTEREST : AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

*Sansar Singh Janjua*

*Consumer is the focal point of all the activities. In fact, he is the very basis which supports superstructure of all operations in the society. Consumer interest, therefore, should receive first priority of all. As a citizen, as a taxpayer and as a buyer, the consumer should have the right to expect that he will get the right type of goods and right quality at the right time and at the right price. In practice, it is well known that the consumer is not only the most ignored, the most harassed, the most suffered but also most docile citizen. The consumer's plight with regard to availability of items like kerosene, sugar and cooking gas is so pitiable that he has resigned himself to his "fate and classified himself as the unimportant person." On the one hand, there is often repeated statement that "customer is always right" and the customer is the "KING". On the other hand, the legal position of a buyer has been expressed in the famous expression "caveat emptor" or "Let the buyer beware." Consumer protection may be viewed from three angles. One is the physical protection of the consumer... measures to protect consumers against products that are unsafe and endanger health. A second aspect is the protection of the consumers economic interest... measures to protect him against deceptive and other unfair trade practices and to provide adequate rights and means of redress. A third and equally important aspect is the protection of public interest against the abuse, the monopoly position and restrictive trade practices. Consumer protection is nothing but with providing safeguard for the basic rights of consumers. However, consumer protection is essential for a healthy economy because this protection alone can give necessary strength to him in the market and restore the balance in the buyer-seller relationship.*

"A customer is the most important visitor in our premises. He is not dependent on us, we are dependent on him. He is not an interruption in our work, he is the purpose of it. He is not an outsider in our business, he is the part of it, we are not doing him a favour by serving him, he is doing us a favour by giving us an opportunity to do so."<sup>1</sup> These words of Gandhiji (1934) stressed the importance of consumers to the producers and their activites involving marketing of goods and services. Consumers, infact play a very significant role in the economic development of a country. Infact, consumers are the pillars of the economy. Hence, every business organisation is required to set its objectives keeping in view the socio-economic and political structure of the society. The basic ideology of modern marketing is : do not sell what you happen to make and feel convient to produce. Produce and make what the consumers want<sup>2</sup>.

The consumer movement in our country has been very weak, though endeavour has been made by the Union Government as well as Governments of States to popularise it. Its presence has been generally known but safely ignored by observers. Consumerism gives new emphasis to the Consumers Bill of Rights-The Magna-Carta of consumers, for instance consumer has a right to full and correct information on prices, on quality of goods and on costs and efficiency distribution. Importance of the consumer to the business has yet to be realised fully. Business makes profit only when goods are consumed or services, utilised. This presupposes consumer,s existence. Business is entirely dependent upon the consumer

not only for its very survival but also for its growth.

In general, consumers are scattered over the whole country. They are highly disorganized. Individually, they have very weak bargaining power. They are not professional or shrewed buyers. Besides, in India, they have an additional handicap, namely, majority of consumer's are illiterate, ignorant and usually lack information to make intelligent purchases.

Consumer movement is a social and economic movement to protect the interests of consumers against the unfair trade practices and other forms of exploitation in matter of availability, quality, quantity and prices of goods and services. The growth of consumerism is the natural outcome of the forces generated by industrial and technological revolution witnessed in the developed countries. The impact of the consumer movement is not being felt in the developing countries which are engaged in the task of achieving an accelerated rate of economic growth.

There are a number of factors leading to an upsurge of consumerism. Industrialisation and mass production resulting in production and marketing of a large variety of consumer goods, no doubt, delight the consumers but also have them confused about their choice in the market place. Evolution of an array of questionable marketing practices by the manufacturers often mislead the consumers.

The consumer's sovereignty over the market place has been eroded due to wide prevalence of a seller's market, imperfect competition and various forms of monopolistic trade practices. The fast pace of technological change has, no doubt, brought in a stream of new products but has created information gaps for the consumers in regard to their quality, performance and utility. The problems are accentuated by the massive advertising campaigns for new products which on many occasions confuse the consumers. The modern technology and new marketing methods have been quite beneficial. But everything is not so pleasant and smooth. The marketeers have taken undue advantage of the consumer ignorance and helplessness. They adopt only those methods and techniques which meet their ends. They have made the consumers a target of their unscrupulous practices. Consequently, the consumers have become the victim of various types of expectations. So, the phrases like 'Consumer is the sovereign', 'Consumer is always right', 'Consumer is king', 'Consumer can do no wrong', seem shallow. The consumer may be a king of corporate activities, but his kingdom remains on the paper only.<sup>3</sup> It has been estimated that Indian consumer is being cheated by about Rs 2000 crore every year.<sup>4</sup>

The social development manifest in education and consumer awareness has promoted various pressure groups of consumers, which seek legitimate protection of the interests of consumers. The need for consumer protection is now being felt more than ever before. Among the myriad products in the market, consumer is, today, nursing a feeling of helplessness, because he is being systematically victimised as regards quality, price of products and service available.

Consumer is the focal point of all the activities. In fact, he is the very basis which supports superstructure of all operations in the society. Consumer interest, therefore, should receive first priority of all. As a citizen, as a taxpayer and as a buyer, the consumer should have the right to expect that he will get the right type of goods and right quality at the right time and at the right price. In practice, it is well known that the consumer is not only the most ignored, the most harassed, the most suffered but also most docile citizen. The consumer's plight with regard to availability of items like kerosine, sugar and cooking gas is so pitiable that he has resigned himself to his "fate and classified himself as the unimportant person." On the one hand, there is oft repeated statement that "customer is always right" and the customer is the "KING". On the other hand, the legal position of a buyer has been expressed in the famous expression "caveat emptor" or "Let the buyer beware."

While the profit in any business is not a crime and it is essential for survival and growth, illegal profit or profiteering through questionable means like product adulteration, fraud, inflationary price practices like hoarding, speculation, black marketing and so on are considered both anti-social and anti-national.

The list of instances and kinds of exploitation through malpractices adopted by businessmen is a very long one. We may mention some of them to indicate the gravity of consumer exploitation so as to prove the dire need of consumer protection and education : lack of safety regulation; food adulteration, short weights and measures, misuse of coloring matter, limitation of manufacture, blatant misleading advertisement, conspicuous consumption; hire purchase plans, advertisement tactics, sales gimmicks, evil practices of powerful multinationals, massive profiteering, illegal trading etc.

The above types of malpractices and the consequent exploitation of consumer, exploitation of consumer interest on a large scale will certainly indicate the pressing, the urgent need for consumer guidance in India. We find that consumer is a very unimportant person in the market.

Consumer protection may be viewed from three angles. One is the physical protection of the consumer... measures to protect consumers against products that are unsafe and endanger health. A second aspect is the protection of the consumers economic interest... measures to protect him against deceptive and other unfair trade practices and to provide adequate rights and means of redress. A third and equally important aspect is the protection of public interest against the abuse, the monopoly position and restrictive trade practices.

Consumer protection is nothing but providing safeguard for the basic rights of consumers. However, consumer protection is essential for a healthy economy because this protection alone can give necessary strength to him in the market and restore the balance in the buyer-seller relationship<sup>5</sup>. Considering the wants and needs of consumers, the consumer protection measures should essentially be concerned with<sup>6</sup>.

- a) The protection from hazards to health and safety;
- b) The promotion and protection of economic interests;
- c) Access to adequate information;
- d) Control of misleading advertisements and deceptive representation;
- e) Consumer education; and
- f) Effective consumer redressal.

The industrial and economic development witnessed during the last four decades has transformed our economic and social scenario. Any Indian today can take pride in the rapid economic progress that we have achieved. The quantitative growth in outputs in industrial and agricultural sectors under planned economic development has been hailed as historic development from the elite economists and sociologists all over the world.

The present economic and technological developments have, no doubt, made perceptible social and economic changes but the consumer's control over the market mechanism has gradually diminished. Consumer's sovereignty in choice of goods and services has been greatly eroded by various forms of unfair, monopolistic and deceptive trade practices. Although there are about 200 voluntary consumer organisations in the country and many of them are doing immense service to promote consumer's cause, their activities are concentrated in metropolitan cities and towns. The movement is still in its infancy and at the grass roots level much more alertness and activity are required.

Self-regulation in business in minimise the need for extensive government intervention. The market profession can regulate its own behaviour and actions by self-discipline and by raising ethical standards. Business community must read the writing on the walls and take without delay, appropriate steps to regulate its conduct and cultivate self-discipline and self-regulation in the large national interests. Let it be noted that this is not merely for protecting the consumer interest but also for protecting the self-interest of the business community itself. Enduring and positive improvements in business practices can be brought about by the businessmen themselves and these changes should be based on the inner will or desire rather than coming from the external force or discipline. Many trade associations have moved positively to respond to growing consumer satisfaction. This response was due to increasing threat of government regulation. Purely voluntary efforts of self-regulation by industry or trade are not likely to be successful, because there are no sanctions in the form of some enforcement machinery. Moral sanction and moral responsibility or obligation may not be powerful for enforcement if all the members of the trade association do not have a higher sense of discipline and suitable temperament, self-regulation, self-control etc.,

Chamber of Commerce and Trade Associations can play an effective role in self-

regulations. Consumer protection is not there normal expected function. Hence, a new set of associations has to be set up on behalf of trade to offer consumer guidance, consumer education and consumer protection. In India, we have such an organisation called Fair Trade Practices Association for enforcing a mode of conduct in fair trading. Complaint handling machinery may be entrusted to special institutions such as MRTPC. Such special bodies can also evolve a code of conduct for fair trade practices-a form of self regulation.

In the past, marketing legislation was by and large business-oriented not consumer-oriented. Statutory regulation is the crudest form as well as last resort to secure a discipline business conduct. Legislation give statutory protection to innocent and ill informed consumers against unfair trade practices. For honest people self-regulation works well and legislation is superfluous.

### **EARLY MEASURES**

A number of consumer protection laws have been developed over the years to protect various interests of consumer. These include Essential Commodities Act, Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, Standards of Weights and Measures Act and MRTP Act. But these arrangements have not led to growth of an effective consumer protection movement in the country. Moreover, these laws are either preventive or punitive in approach and do not provide speedy reliefs and compensations to the aggrieved consumers.

The procedures for bringing the culprits to book under the existing laws are also long-drawn and cumbersome. Litigation is a costly affair which most consumers cannot afford. The law of torts is not well developed in our present legal system. Besides, there is no common platform for officials and non-officials for discussing the consumer's problems and for advising the Government on policies and measures needed to promote and protect the rights and interests of the consumers.

Consumer protection entails protecting the rights and interests of the consumers in matters of availability, quality, quantity and price of goods and services. Protecting the interests of the consumers from unfair and deceptive trade practices is of paramount concern to society.

### **CONSUMERS' RIGHTS**

Consumer should have the right to be protected against marketing of goods which are hazardous to life and property. The right to be informed about the quality, quantity, potency, purity, standard and price of goods and to be protected against unfair trade practices is also theirs. Consumers also have the right to be assured, wherever possible, access to a variety of goods at competitive prices and also to be assured that consumers' interests will receive due consideration at appropriate forums. Redressal against unfair trade practices or unscrupulous exploitation of consumers and proper consumer education must also figure in consumers' rights.

## GOVERNMENT AND LEGISLATION

Government has accorded a high priority to consumer protection and 'concern for consumer' is included in the 20-Point programme of 1986. Our Prime Minister is very keen about the development of a broad and effective consumer movement in the country. Considering the need to provide speedy redressal to consumers' grievances and to be aware of the deficiencies in the existing administrative and legal arrangements, the Government introduced the Consumer Protection Bill in 1986 Session of the Parliament. This Bill which received overwhelming support from members of both the Houses, constituted a landmark in the social and economic legislations of this country.

The salient features of the new consumer protection bill apply to all goods and services and provide consumer protection in matters of any consumer complaint arising out of unfair trade practice (other than of large industrial houses to be dealt by MRTP Commission), defective goods and services, unreasonable prices charged in excess of statutory price or voluntarily declared prices. Defective goods and defective services include any fault, imperfection or shortcoming in the quality, quantity, potency, purity or standard.

### NEW PROVISIONS

The Government is planning to set up Consumer Protection Councils in states comprising, non-official and official members. These Councils will provide a platform for discussion of consumer problems and would advise the concerned Central or State Government on policies and programmes to promote and protect the rights and interests of the consumers.

The new legislation enshrines the rights of the consumer such as right to safety, right to information, right to education and right to seek redressal. It is based on law of torts providing reasonable compensation to the aggrieved consumers. It provides for redressal machinery which will be available within the easy reach of the consumers.

The quasi-judicial machinery is a three-tier set-up at the district, state and national levels. The District Consumer Redressal Forum will have powers to redress consumer complaints in matter of unfair trade practices, defective goods and services upto a claim amount of Rs. One Lakh. The State Commission can entertain consumer's claim in excess of Rs. one lakh and upto Rs. Ten lakhs. National Commission will have powers to award compensation for damages above Rs. Ten lakhs.

The State Commission and National Commission have been vested with appropriate appellate and revisionary powers. To speed up justice to the consumers, only one appeal is contemplated in the judicial set-up incorporated in the legislation.

To provide clout to the legislation, penal and punitive provisions have been incorporated. Where the trader or manufacturer fails to carry out the orders of the District Forum, State Commission or National Commission, he will be punishable with an imprisonment for a term

which shall not be less than one month but which may extend to three years or with a fine which shall not be less than Rs. 2000 but which may extend to Rs. 10,000 or with both.

To provide speedy redressals, the procedures envisaged for the quasi-judicial machinery are simple, inexpensive and time-bound. No fees have been prescribed for filing of the complaints before any redressal forum.

### IMPLEMENTATION

The success of this legislation will depend on effective implementation of its provisions by the Central and State Governments in letter and spirits. In addition, it will require support of a strong broad-based consumer movement in the country, involvement of women and youth and cooperation of trade and industry.

### CONSUMER PROTECTION MOVEMENT IN PUNJAB.

At present there are 68 registered voluntary consumer organisations contributing their efforts for the promotion and protection of consumer interests registered in the Punjab state. In order to protect the interest of the consumers, the Government of Punjab is implementing the provisions of Consumers Protection Act, 1986. The Punjab Consumer Protection Rules, 1987 have been notified in the State vide Notification dated Nov. 27.1987. At the state level, Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission has been functioning at Chandigarh since 1991. Here it is worth mentioning that, in the state of Punjab, Consumer Protection Council was established in the year 1992 and remained working upto September 15,1995. After that, it could not work due to lack of funds.

The foregoing discussion shows that the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 has been enacted to promote and protect the rights of the consumers. To provide speedy and simple redressal to consumer disputes, a three-tier quasi-judicial machinery is sought to be set-up at the district, State and Central levels who are to observe the principles of natural justice and have been empowered to give reliefs of a specific nature and to award whatever appropriate compensation to the consumer. A milestone in the history of socio-economic legislations by re-defining the legal relationship between consumers and suppliers or manufacturers of good and services, the new law is a major step forward in the direction of justice for the consumers through an institutional arrangement which is easily available, speedy, less expensive redressal of their grievances thus enabling them to seek compensation for damages in case of faulty goods. The Madhya Pradesh Bill, 1984 the only comprehensive model Bill had an influence over the Act. However, the infrastructure and functioning of agencies for settlement of consumer disputes needs to be reformed so as to make them more effective.

Regarding the implementation of the Act, the redressal machinery has been made functional only in fourteen states/ union territories. In this connection, it becomes necessary that other states should make sincere efforts to implement the Consumer Protection Act by

establishing district and state level redressal agencies without any further delay.

It may be pointed out that each District Forum under Section 10 and the State Commission under Section 16 is composed of three members only irrespective of the area and population of the State concerned. For instance, states like Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra having large areas and more population are having only three-member forums at the district and state levels. Moreover, the members are required to sit in single Bench. As a consequence it becomes difficult for them to cope with thousands and thousands of cases coming before them. In this connection, it is submitted that their number should not be confined to three rather it should be increased to several members keeping in view the population of the states including sufficient number of members qualified in law. It is further submitted that the Commission should be allowed to sit in Benches and every Bench should have a member qualified in law. The same can be applied to the structure of sittings of the Commission at the National level under Section 20 which is presently composed of only five members.

Regarding the procedure to be followed by the Redressal Agencies on receipt of complaints which has been prescribed under Section 13(1) of the Act it may be noted that under clauses (f) and (g) of this Section, any party can "dispute the correctness of the methods of appropriate laboratory or analysis or test adopted by the appropriate laboratory by submitting his objections in writing in regard to such a report or analysis. Moreover, parties shall be given a reasonable opportunity of being heard in this connection by the concerned Forum. Who is to judge the correctness of this analysis ? The correctness of the test or analysis made by an analyst or technical expert as such cannot be judged by the court which in other words, means that the court needs to send the goods for analysis to some other laboratory etc. All this may ultimately cause delay in the proceedings of these courts. In this connection, it is submitted that in cases of complaints alleging defects in the goods which cannot be determined without proper analysis or test of the goods, the sample of the goods should be sent for testing or analysis to at least three laboratories simultaneously and the concurrence in the two reports should be taken as final and no party should be given an opportunity to raise objection against it so as to avoid any delay in the disposal of consumer disputes.

Moreover, the provision for payment of any fees on the part of the consumers for laboratory test or analysis (Section 13 (d)) should be deleted so as to allow the consumers to bring their complaints and get redress without incurring any extra financial burden at all.

Under the Consumer Protection Act only four reliefs of a specific nature are mentioned in Section 14 which can be granted by the Redressal Forums through an order namely removal of defect pointed out by the appropriate laboratory, replacement of defective goods with new goods of similar description, return the price or charges paid by the complainant or payment of compensation. The agencies, however, as have been rightly pointed out have no power to make an order for banning the goods which can be dangerous to health and life. These courts

should be empowered to make an order in this regard too, by inserting a clause to this effect under Section 14.

It is one of the rights of the consumers to seek redressal against unfair trade practices or unscrupulous exploitation of consumers by any trader by making an allegation in the complaint of loss or damage as a result of such practice, as have been mentioned under Section 2(c) of the Act. The expression unfair trade practice has been given the same meaning as in Section 36-A of the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act of 1969 but shall not include an unfair trade practice adopted by the owner of an undertaking to which Part A of Chapter III of that Act applies or by any person acting on behalf or for the benefit of, such owner. It means a trade practice which for the purpose of promoting the sale, use or supply of any goods or for the provision of any services, adopts one or more of the practices prescribed and thereby causes loss or injury to the consumers of such goods or services, whether by eliminating or restricting competition or otherwise. Thus, such a practice should be one or more of those listed under Section 36-A. Moreover, under Section 36-D of the same Act, the MRTP Commission may inquire into any trade practice which may come before it for inquiry and if it is of the opinion that the practice is prejudicial to the public interest or to the interest of any consumer or consumers generally, it may by order direct that (a) the practice shall be discontinued or shall not be repeated, and (b) any agreement relating to such unfair trade practice shall be void or shall stand modified in respect thereof in such manner as may be specified in the order.

The redressal agencies under the Consumer Protection Act have neither any authority to make an order for discontinuance or non-repetition of an unfair trade practice nor to make such order for grant of damage with respect to a practice not coming under the exhaustive definition but which may become necessary as a result of technological advancements. Therefore, it is submitted that such powers should be conferred on the Consumer Dispute Settlement bodies by inserting more clauses in relevant Section 14 (1) of the Act or otherwise.

As regards the functioning of the Redressal Machinery it has been reported 28 that whatever courts have been set-up under the Act, seem to be reluctant in awarding damages to consumers even after concluding that the consumer has been cheated or befooled 29. In other cases courts generally reserve their judgements and do not fix any date of pronouncement of decision This deprives the consumer of the limitation period for final appeal against such orders." Therefore, it is need of the hour that the consumer redressal agencies should function in such a way as to help the consumers in putting forth their complaints before them instead of losing their faith in that regard.

Any person aggrieved by an order of the National Consumer Redressal Commission can prefer an appeal to the Supreme Court under Section 23 within a period of 30 days or after that in case of a sufficient cause being shown to the satisfaction of the Supreme Court. Thus appeal to the Supreme Court is unrestricted. However, it should be restricted and appeal to

the Supreme Court should be made as it is made in civil suits from High Court to the Supreme Court. In other words, it should be allowed only if the National Commission certifies that the case is a fit one to be decided by the Supreme Court involving a substantial question of law of general importance. The provision in this direction should be inserted in the Act.<sup>7</sup>

### SUGGESTIONS :-

On the basis of above findings the following suggestions are made.

- a) No organisation can function smoothly and efficiently without funds. The consumer forums have suffered a lot on this account and need sufficient funds from the Government to meet their day to day requirements. The Governments should provide the basic facilities like proper accommodation to run the office, good furniture, an effective library etc, to all the forums.
- b) In order to speed up the disposal of complaints, The CDRAs should strictly adhere to the provisions of Consumer Protection Act while allowing an adjournment.
- c) The analysis reveals that a large number of respondents filed their complaints in consumer courts through advocates. However, under the law it is not necessary to engage an advocates. It is, therefore suggested that people must be motivated and educated about the procedure to file their complaints in District forum. Further, the act should be so amended where the Complainant does not engage an advocate, the opposite party would cause to have the services of a counsel. It is suggested that to contest consumer cases free of charge, more Consumer Legal Aid Cells are needed in the direction of consumer justice to secure redressal of consumer grievances.

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## ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS FOR TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL WELFARE

Jayanta Krishna Sarmah

*The role of voluntary agencies in tribal development is assuming importance because of their special qualities like innovativeness, committed agency workers for effective implementation, flexibility in approach to suit local conditions, close contact with local people, high level of motivation and minimum procedural practices. The present study focuses on efficiency and effectiveness of the voluntary agencies in the state of Assam. It reveals the involvement of various types of voluntary action towards empowerment of women, issues of livelihood, health, legal aid credit facilities, vocational trainings etc.*

Social Welfare has its roots in voluntary action and had been sustained from several centuries in the past up to the present. Non-governmental voluntary organizations are apt ones to mobilize villagers inclined for constructive work. They are best suited to channelise their spare time and energy and by doing so, they foster the growth of leadership at various levels of the rural society. Also, they are more capable of bringing in their work the 'human touch' that follows from a less formal but equally effective approach. As these organizations develop and show increasing competence in assuming larger responsibilities, they become qualified and fit for some additional functions which at present are vested in regular bureaucracy. For this reason, they are at a great advantage in securing popular support for their cause and public participation in their programmes.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are sometimes supposed to be potentially superior to official agencies in three respects: (a) their workers can be more sincerely devoted to the task of reducing the sufferings of the poor than the government staff; (b) they can have a better rapport with the rural poor than government employees; and (c) since voluntary organizations are not bound by rigid bureaucratic rules and procedures, they can readjust their activities quickly and continuously as they learn from experience.<sup>1</sup> Besides, they have a considerable background of experience, and conduct of welfare programmes can react more quickly to changing social needs than can be expected of official machinery.

The closest possible collaboration between NGOs and Government is absolutely essential. Regarding the relation between State and voluntary action in the field of social welfare, the Report on Charitable Trusts published by the British Government says : State action and voluntary action were not the antithesis of each other; rather they sprang from the same roots, were designed to meet the same needs and had the same motivating force behind them. Indeed, historically, the state action is voluntary action crystallized and made universal. An analysis of public welfare action at any time would reveal mixed motives, some genuinely humanitarian, some inspired by cupidity or self arrangement. But neither in the historical record nor in an examination of their motives would there be discovered the making of a fundamental distinction

between state action for public welfare and voluntary action for the same purpose.<sup>2</sup>

The word 'voluntary' does not suggest total absence of state control. Voluntary organizations have necessarily to operate within the framework of laws enacted by the State. They, for instance, have to comply with the Societies Registration Act, Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, Income Tax Act, Industrial Dispute Act, Labour Laws etc. Their accounts are subject to audit and the Government has power to investigate any foreign assistance to voluntary organizations. According to Lord Beveridge, a voluntary organization, properly speaking, is an organization which, whether its workers are paid or unpaid, is initiated and governed by its own members without external control.<sup>3</sup> Definitions given by Mary Morris and Modeline Roff are also similar. The only addition, Modeline Roff makes is that these voluntary organizations should depend in part at least, upon finding support from voluntary resources.<sup>4</sup>

Michael Banton defines voluntary organization as a group organized for the pursuit of one interest or several interests in common.<sup>5</sup> In the words of David L. Sills, voluntary organization is a group of persons organized on the basis of voluntary membership without state control for the furtherance of some common interests of its members.<sup>6</sup> Attempting a comprehensive definition of voluntary organization, Prof. M.R. Inamdar observes: A voluntary organization in development to be of durable use to the community has to nurse a strong desire and impulse for community development among its members, to be economically viable to possess dedicated and hard working leadership and command resources of expertise in the functions undertaken. Norman Johnson in his examination of various definitions of voluntary social services points out four main characteristics: (i) Method of formation, which is voluntary on the part of a group of people, (ii) Method of government, with self-governing organization to decide on its constitution, its servicing, its policy, and its clients, (iii) Method of financing, with at least some of its revenues drawn from voluntary services; and (iv) Motives with the pursuit of profit included.<sup>7</sup>

Studies made by Choudhury (1971)<sup>8</sup>, Lalitha(1975)<sup>9</sup> and Mukherjee(1979)<sup>10</sup> shows that a significant change has taken place in the structure of voluntary action. In earlier times most of the volunteers were unpaid, but now they are gradually being replaced by professional and paid worker. For the full time given to voluntary work the workers have to earn a living to maintain themselves and their families. The work too, demands sustained attention of qualified personnel. Studies also show that workers in voluntary organizations in many cases function as multipurpose functionaries largely due to inadequate personnel and material resources. Consequently, they are often found doing work unrelated to their educational and professional competence.

India has a glorious tradition of organizing voluntary work for social good. As a matter of fact, the history and development of social welfare in India prior to independence is primarily the

history of voluntary action. The roots of voluntarism in India can be traced to the nature, social milieu and ethos of Indian people who believe in acts of charity rendering help to the people in distress caused by natural calamities, rural poverty, exploitation and denial of social justice.

The tribals were isolated in India under British rule. It was never a matter of concern for the colonial administration to enable them to take advantage of the technological order of the modern civilization. During that time, it was the exclusive burden of the non-official agencies to look after the welfare of the economically, socially and politically backward tribal communities.

Under the impact of Gandhian age, a very prominent member of the Servants of India Society, Thakkar Bapa laid foundation of an Ashram at Dohad in Gujrat (then a part of the old Bombay Presidency) in 1921. By single minded devotion and hard work, he established 21 institutions in various parts of the country including two institutions in Assam.<sup>11</sup> Besides, it had 62 other affiliated or recognized bodies five of which were working in Assam. After independence, several such organizations have been formed in the tribal areas of different states which are working for the tribal development with the financial assistance of the government and public donations. Among these organizations, the most important is Bharatiya Adimjati Sevak Sangha, which was set up in 1948 on the initiative of Thakkar Bapa and was registered in 1949. Its objective was : The development of tribal communities in India ---- socially, economically, culturally and educationally, with a view to enable those to take their legitimate place in national life of the country as equal citizens.<sup>12</sup>

Article 19 (1)(c) of the Constitution of India confers on the Indian citizens the 'right to form associations'. Freedom of association is rightly regarded as taking high rank among the liberties of man. It is the liberty of the widest scope, for man may wish to associate for any purpose which two or more of them may have in common. They may wish to associate to do something together, or to get something done to further their own or other people's interest, to resist oppression or injustice or to practice either to pursue great or small, general or public object.<sup>13</sup>

It was only after 1947 that voluntary organizations had anything to do with the Government. The Government, on its part, not only started operating some programmes of social welfare directly, but also started a programme of financial assistance to voluntary organizations. A provision of Rs. 4 crore was made in the First Five Year Plan for assistance to voluntary organizations as they were found to be 'capable of dealing with social problems for which the State cannot provide in sufficient measures.'<sup>14</sup>

In the successive Five Year Plans the importance of the role of voluntary organizations for successful implementation of plans was reiterated. Discussing people's participation on an

ideological level, plan document found it necessary to give it a concrete shape and observed: In the activities in which official agencies are engaged, there is a large sphere in which the co-operation of the people can be sought and secured to achieve a degree of success which would otherwise not be possible. These tasks should be identified precisely and the obligations and responsibilities of the people in relation thereto made known clearly. The concept of public co-operation is related in its wider aspect to the much larger sphere of voluntary action in which the initiative and organizational responsibility rests completely with the people and their leaders. So vast are unsatisfied needs of the people that all the investments in the public and private sectors together can, at this stage, only make a limited provision for them.<sup>15</sup>

To deal with the voluntary organizations, different bodies are constituted in India. The Ministry of Rural Development set up a body to deal with voluntary organizations: The Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART). The CAPART was set-up in 1986 by merging two existing organizations, namely People's Action for Development (India) and the Council for Advancement of Rural Technology. The CAPART channalizes funds to the voluntary organizations for implementing rural development programmes, and to this end a portion of the funds available under different anti-poverty programmes, like Integrated Rural Development Programme, Rural Landless Employment Generation Programme, National Rural Employment Programme, Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas, Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme and Low Cost Sanitation is made available to CAPART for use by the voluntary organizations.

More specifically, the CAPART has been established 'to encourage, promote and assist voluntary action in the implementation of projects for enhancement of rural prosperity and to strengthen and promote voluntary efforts in rural development with focus on injecting new technological inputs in this belief'.<sup>16</sup>

In 1953, The Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) was established under the chairmanship of Durgabai Deshmukh, the then member of Planning Commission. The CSWB provides support to NGOs under variety of programmes in order to facilitate and strengthen their role in empowering women through education and training, through collective mobilization and awareness creation, through income generating facilities and by the provision of support services.

The Assam State Social Welfare Advisory Board (ASSWAB) was set-up by the Government of Assam, in June 1954 by way of concurrence between the CSWB and the State Government. It is a state level organization for the management and implementation of programmes sponsored by the CSWB.

The CSWB and ASSWAB have prepared some conditions for an applicant NGO to be eligible for grants under the CSWB programmes. At the time of sending applications to the ASSWAB, the voluntary organizations are to be registered under an appropriate Act or to be regularly constituted branch of a registered welfare organization. No organization is eligible for grants from the board under any scheme without completing at least two years after registration. In case of the scheme of Family Counseling Centers, completion of three years after registration is necessarily required. Relaxation may however, be made (i) in case of institutions in hilly, remote, border, backward and tribal areas, (ii) in case, where the need for starting services are not available, and (iii) in case, where the need for starting a new service is recognized.<sup>17</sup>

The applicant voluntary organizations are required to constitute Managing Committee with clearly defined powers, duties and responsibilities and written Constitution of it. To intimate the activity for which the grant is required the voluntary organizations must accumulate proper facilities, resources, personnel, managerial skill and experience. The financial position of the voluntary organizations is looked into before allotting the grant. The financial position of the organizations must be sound and the activities of the institutions must be opened to all citizens of India without distinction of religion, race, cast or language. Besides, the voluntary organizations must submit separate accounts audited and bearing the seal of a Chartered Accountant, in respect of grants sanctioned and released by the CSWB in three forms i.e. Receipt and Payment, Income and Expenditure and Balance Sheet along with utilization certificate. These could be submitted within six months of the closure of the financial year to which the grants are sanctioned or released.<sup>18</sup>

The CSWP assists the voluntary organizations for seven different kinds of schemes. These are Condensed Courses of Education for women, the Vocational Training Programme for women, Awareness Generation Programme, family Counselling Centers, Working Women's Hostel, Crèche Units and Socio-Economic Programmes.

Condensed Courses of Education for women is the scheme which aims at facilitating social and economic empowerment of women by providing them education and relevant skills. The scheme is specifically designed to help dropouts and failed candidates to complete their school education. Under this scheme, courses can be organized for women of the age of 15 years and above. In Assam, the women are provided two year non-residential educational courses to enable them to appear for recognized primary, middle, metric, higher secondary or equivalent examination as private candidates. A scheme for skill development is also provided for this programme of assistance. Besides, one year non-residential education course for women is also conducted for women who have failed in High School Leaving Certificate Examination as private candidates. A number of voluntary organizations are working in this field in Dhemaji,

Lakhimpur and Sonitpur District (Table-1.01).<sup>19</sup>

**Table 1.01**  
**VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS CONDUCTING CONDENSED COURSE OF EDUCATION  
FOR WOMEN IN DHEMAJI, LAKHIMPUR AND SONITPUR DISTRICT**

| Voluntary Organization                                       | Address                                              | Level             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| No.2-Bajayantipur Samaj Kalyan Samiti                        | P.O. Jairampur, Dist.Dhemaji.                        | M.E.<br>Level     |
| Panbari Samoguri Nabajyoti Sangha                            | P.O. Panbari, Dist.Lakhimpur                         | M.E.<br>Level     |
| Lakhimpur Sishu Aru Matrimangal Samiti                       | Millan Nagar, Dist. Lakhimpur                        | M.E.<br>Level     |
| No.2- Napam Mautgaon Yubak Sangha and Ramkrishna Puthibharal | No.2Mautgaon, P.O.Saraimaria, Lakhimpur              | H.S.L.C.<br>Level |
| Bhaktnala Samuguri Miri Yubak Sanga                          | P.O- Kadamguri, Dist.Dhemaji                         | M.E.<br>Level     |
| Pragati Yubak Kendra                                         | Vill-GosainPukhuri, AdiAlengi Satra, Dist. Lakhimpur | M.E.<br>Level     |
| Saimari Kacharigaon Abhijan Sangha                           | P.O.Deori Barbam, Dist.Dhemaji                       | M.E.<br>Level     |
| No.1 Baijayantipur Raisumai Yubak Sangha                     | P.O.Kadamguri, Dist.Dhemaji                          | L.P.<br>Level     |
| Lakukijan Surujmukhi Mahila Samiti                           | Vill:Lakukijan, P.O.Jairampur, Dist.Dhemaji          | M.E.<br>Level     |
| No.1 Dharamapur Dailun Yubak Sangha                          | Vill&P.O.Dharamapur, Dist.Dhemaji                    | M.E.<br>Level     |

SOURCE: File Document, Assam State Social Welfare Advisory Board, Guwahati.

It is observed that most of the voluntary organizations prefer to take M.E.level courses only. Most of them take financial help only for one or two financial years and discontinue their programme. Again new voluntary organizations come forward to conduct the programme. The voluntary organizations discontinue the programme not because of unavailability of needy people but due to inappropriate maintenance of audit and accounts by the organizations.

The Vocational Training Programme for women is formulated for vocational training of needy women in the age group of 15 years and above. The Advisory Board provides assistance to the voluntary organizations having requisite capability, experience and infrastructure to conduct this programme. The vocational courses are divided into Seven distinct categories<sup>20</sup>:

- a) Commerce and Business related Vocations, b) Engineering based Vocations, c) Textile Vocations, d) Chemical Based Vocations, e) Home Science Related Vocations, f) Para Medical Vocations, g) Miscellaneous Vocations.

In Assam, the duration of the course can vary between one to two years. Training programmes of less than one year duration can also be considered. Preference is given to destitute women, widows, women belonging to weaker sections, specially those belonging to Scheduled Tribes and backward classes. A number of voluntary organizations of Missing populated areas are engaged in these programmes.<sup>21</sup>

Broad based voluntary organizations can avail of grants from the CSWB and ASSWB to assist women beneficiaries to set up agro based units like Dairy, Poultry, Piggery, Goat Rearing and Weaving. The applicant organizations should be exclusively women organization with a membership of at least 20 women. A grant of up to Rs. 3 lakh can be provided to facilitate the setting up of a production unit by the grantee institution. The institution also requires contributing a limit of 15 percent of the project cost. A number of voluntary organizations of Missing populated areas are conducting these programmes (Table: 1.02).

Table: 1.02

**VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS CONDUCTING AGRO-BASED SOCIO ECONOMIC  
PROGRAMMES IN THE MISSING POPULATED AREAS**

| Voluntary Organisation                      | Address with District                | Scheme          |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Kalyan Jyoti Mahila Samiti                  | Vill:Khoga,Tinikhuti, Dist:Lakhimpur | Piggery         |
| Jyoti Millan Kendra                         | P.O. Sandakhkhowa, Dist:Lakhimpur    | Poultry / Press |
| Noikosh Mahila Samiti                       | P.O. Machkhowa, Dist:Lakhimpur       | Handloom        |
| Srimanta Sankardev Samaj Kalyan Kendra      | P.O.LikhakChapari, Dist:Lakhimpur    | Handloom        |
| Milita Mahila Samiti                        | P.O.Dikrong, Dist:Lakhimpur          | Handloom        |
| Prakritik Chikitcha Kendra Aru              | Vill- Maghowa, P.O.-Padampur,        | Handloom        |
| Bhagawat Ashram                             | Dist:Lakhimpur                       |                 |
| Dakhin-PubNarayanpur Sanmilita Silpi Sangha | P.O.panbari, Dist:Lakhimpur          | Dairy           |
| Sarbodaya Samaj Kalyan Samiti               | P.O.Machkhowa, Dist:Lakhimpur        | Dairy           |
| Behali Samaj Kalyan Sangha                  | P. O.Gangmouhan, Dist:Sonitpur       | Mahila Mandal   |
| Batiamari Mahila Mandal                     | P. O.Batiamari, Dist:Sonitpur        | Mahila Mandal   |

Source: File Document, Assam State Social Welfare Advisory Board.

Most of the voluntary organizations working in Missing dominated areas are small women and youth organizations. Their area of jurisdiction is also a limited one.

Under such background the role of Tezpur District Mahila Samiti has to be looked into which has become an influencing force in assisting rural and tribal women over the last eight decades of its existence. The Tezpure District Mahila Samiti (TDMS) was established in 1928 in Tezpur of Sonitpur District. Adhering to Gandhian ideology, it works towards self-reliance. In 1947, Tezpur Mahila Samiti extended its organizational activities, federating a large number of primary or village Mahila Samitis under it. As a federation of almost 100 rural and tribal mahila samitis, there is total membership of 10,000 women under TDMS.

The primary objectives of TDMS are to empower women among primary Mahila Samitis around issues of livelihood, health, legal aid, and credit facilities. The entire decade of the 80s

and 90s of TDMS was invested on high quality training to women of tribal and rural mahila samitis in order to revitalize their organizational capabilities and knowledge base.

For TDMS, facilitating economic empowerment of its members has always been a priority, either through micro-enterprise or a group enterprise. The women members in the villages, mostly engaged in self-employment or agricultural labour have been supported through activities like handloom weaving, sericulture and legal counseling. A group enterprise was established through the research-cum-training centre. TDMS has developed a Health Unit to work on reproductive health issues. By the end of February 2000, five health centres were established with communities support in Patgaon, Silonighat, Gorbil, Bamunipam and Bardikrai. All these five are Missing villages in Sonitpur District. The objectives of the Health Unit includes—(a) to make people aware of the importance of reproductive health, (b) to generate awareness and adopt suitable measures to safeguard the health of new born babies, (c) to motivate people to adopt correct contraceptive methods to curb population and accept small family concept, (d) to generate gender awareness, and (e) to enhance qualitative and quantitative use of health services from Public Health Centers. With these objectives, its awareness meetings have already covered the topics like malaria, water borne disease, hygiene sanitation and reproductive health.

The Legal Aid Cell of TDMS, established in 1992 with a grant form the global fund for women (USA), continues to impart legal aid and counselling. The success of earlier interaction and initiatives led to the selection of TDMS as the implementing agency for the project --- Legal Literacy, Legal Aid and Education on Rights. The one year project was funded to the tune of over 3.2 lakh.<sup>22</sup> The project aimed to generate legal capacity at the grassroots level, increase public awareness, sensitize authorities responsible for administration of justice. It sought to network among community and women social workers and the general public with the intention of creating a human approach to crimes against women. The foremost importance of the project was the desire to create an effective climate for the promotion of legal rights of women and their protection against violence and abuse. The numbers of cases registered in the TDMS Legal Cell are as follows :<sup>23</sup> (Chart I)

|      |     |     |             |
|------|-----|-----|-------------|
| 1995 | ... | ... | ...60 Cases |
| 1996 | ... | ... | ...56 Cases |
| 1997 | ... | ... | ...69 Cases |
| 1998 | ... | ... | ...68 Cases |
| 1999 | ... | ... | ...38 Cases |

|                 |     |     |             |
|-----------------|-----|-----|-------------|
| 2000            | ... | ... | ...130Cases |
| 2001            | ... | ... | ...141Cases |
| 2002            | ... | ... | ... 83Cases |
| 2003            | ... | ... | ...102Cases |
| 2004            | ... | ... | ...151Cases |
| 2005            | ... | ... | ...213Cases |
| 2006            | ... | ... | ...200Cases |
| 2007(Upto June) | ... | ... | ...98Cases  |

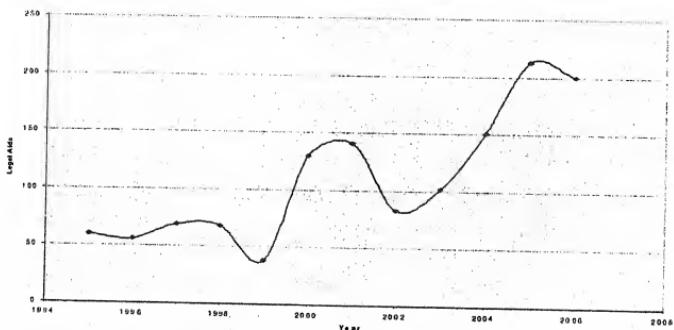


Chart-I : Year wise registration of cases in Legal Aid Cell, TDMS ( 1995- 2007)

Women's Thrift and Credit co-operative Society, popularly known as the Mahila Sanchay Samabaya (MSS), is a project run successfully by TDMS. The fundamental concept of MSS is that money raised by women themselves will then be available for them to use as loans, income generation and add to asset creation in their names which is rare in traditional economy.<sup>24</sup> The main objective of MSS is to increase women's participation in economic activities through which a change could be brought into their living pattern, economic status, literacy rate and health standard. It was expected that women's progress would lead to progress for the family and the community. Another objective of the MSS is to minimize the power of money lenders. The long term goal is to raise women of weaker sections into autonomous and bankable individuals.

Each MSS has a president, secretary and book-keeper constituting its committee. They have been trained by the TDMS team to handle its committee. Most MSS have one sub

group for every 10 members (smaller groups have 5 members) with a leader (Dal Netri) for this sub-group, selected by its members. In many villages, committee members and members of the Primary Rural Mahila Samitis affiliated to TDMS are Committee members and members of the MSS as well. The MSS meets every month on a pre-determined day between 2 and 12 of the month, without fail.<sup>25</sup> The pattern is repeated so that it is easier for the women to remember the date of meeting. The place of meeting is normally the 'Naamghar', but it is not uncommon to see meetings being held in the courtyard of homes of functionaries and even in the open under the shade of trees. Ninety percent of the members across the 20 MSS are constituted by women between the ages of 30 to 70 years and only 10 percent are constituted by those below 30 years.<sup>26</sup>

Members are increasing at a rapid rate within certain MSS such as Bordubia, Balikhuti, Gerua, and Tumuki. For the convenience of book-keeping, members in these villages have been divided under two groups. While in Bordubia, there are two sets of functionaries for the two groups, in other villages the president of the MSS, secretary and book-keeper are same for both the groups. Membership of the MSS is to be restricted only to those below the poverty line.

The numbers of members of all the 20 MSS with total fund in the villages as of March 31, 1998 are seen in the following list. (Table – 1.03)

**Table: 1.03**

**MAHILA SANCHAY SAMABAY (MSS) VILLAGES UNDER TDMS, THE NUMBER OF MEMBERS AND TOTAL FUND (In Rs:AS OF June, 2007)**

| Sl.<br>No. | Sanchy-<br>Bharal | Village       | Memb<br>ers | Savings | Surplus | Fund   | Loan<br>Distribut<br>ed | Loan<br>Return | Loan<br>Outstanding |
|------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------|---------|---------|--------|-------------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| 1          | Pub Sotia         | Sotia         | 165         | 48800   | 47974   | 101798 | 167800                  | 163250         | 4550                |
| 2          | Purbajyoti        | Kasarigaon    | 114         | 20680   | 4823    | 25585  | 23200                   | 14200          | 9000                |
| 3          | Amarjyoti         | Khanaguri     | 197         | 120000  | 216890  | 344623 | 887950                  | 876400         | 11500               |
| 4          | Manaka            | Ranga Pukhuri | 168         | 96440   | 33300   | 129750 | 176350                  | 132700         | 43650               |
| 5          | Charigaon         | Jamuguri      | 50          | 6950    | 490     | 7440   | 7450                    | 3025           | 4425                |
| 6          | Srijani           | Singri        | 350         | 177450  | 214799  | 394585 | 907025                  | 693055         | 213970              |
| 7          | Sarojani          | Singri        | 300         | 151530  | 183139  | 334520 | 396630                  | 736659         | 199971              |
| 8          | Mother Taraja     | Gharjuli      | 76          | 7380    | 76      | 7456   | 6000                    | 400            | 5600                |

Source: File Document, TDMS, August, 2007

Being exclusively for women, the MSS are truly catering to their needs and long standing desire of 'owing what they were never expected to own'. In brief, the MSS is a support to women's group in rural and tribal villages of Sonitpur District. The main advantage of the MSS is in its democratic framework where women take loans with minimal interest rates. Decisions are taken together with the knowledge of all members present in the gathering. Different NGOs from North Eastern states such as Naga Mother Association, Tripura Avivasi Mahila Samiti; New Mandal Mahila Samiti, Meghalaya; Rural Service Agency, Manipur; Prantik Mahila Unnayan Kendra, North Lakhimpur, Assam are seeking TDMS's help for training on thrift and credit. Its thrift and credit programme is gradually acquiring importance locally and regionally.

In this situation, a significant argument in favour of voluntarism is the fact that it makes moral hazard easier to overcome; decentralized agents delivering welfare are more likely to have knowledge of the circumstances in which welfare problems arise and be more alert to abuses of the system. This consideration would apply whether the welfare is delivered privately or publicly.<sup>27</sup> Every piece of social policy substitutes for some traditional arrangement ... in which public authorities take over, at least in part, the role of the family, the ethnic and neighbourhood group, of voluntary associations.<sup>28</sup>

Thus, it is sure that the role of voluntary agencies in tribal development and social welfare is indubitably important because of their special qualities like innovativeness, committed agency workers for effective implementation, flexibility in approach to suit local conditions, close contact with local people, high level of motivation and minimum procedural practices. A number of voluntary organizations which are working in Assam has been setting up examples in this direction.

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## THE DOHA ROUND OF WORLD TRADE NEGOTIATIONS : A PREVIEW AND PERSPECTIVE

(A developing country analysis)

Jagadish K. Patnaik

*The object of the essay is to examine the present status of the trading arrangement vis-a-vis the developing countries. This essay will focus on the background of the present trade talks, which will provide the context for a perspective of the trade negotiations. In the second section, we will attempt to briefly highlight the salient points of the previous rounds of negotiations in the context of the developing countries. In the third section, we will discuss the eighth round, the Uruguay Round, which preceded the present round. The fourth section will analyze the Doha round negotiations for understanding the present position of the trade regime. Finally, in conclusion we will observe the need for greater flexibility on the part of the member countries of the world trade system to facilitate the globalization process with greater rigour.*

### I. Introduction :

The World Trade system is in a flux.<sup>1</sup> Last century witnessed eight rounds of negotiations to set the rules for the conduct of trade and commerce among nation states. The ending of last century, however, again necessitated for proceeding with another round of negotiations. This is owing to the inadequacy of the world trade system to cope up with the changing needs of time. Despite numerous derogations and compromises, the eighth round, i.e. the Uruguay Round (UR), seemed to evolve a formidable set of rules for realizing free and fair trade in the world, though.<sup>2</sup> There may have been reservations as to fairness of the conduct of free trade by the most developed countries. The developing countries are no less far either. There have been so many bottlenecks in implementing free trade in consonance with the provisions of the Charter. It is, however, to be mentioned that the WTO agreements are concerned with goods, services and intellectual property. The UR agreements dealt with them though, there is still work to be done.<sup>3</sup>

As the developing countries are integrating with the world economy, it is imperative that the barriers to trade need to be eliminated though<sup>4</sup>. The cold attitude by the rich countries, however, has been coming in the way of fuller participation of the developing countries in the world trade arena.<sup>5</sup> The proposal to continue with the trade talks for furthering the liberalization of world trade through trade talks in the Doha Round is indicative of the world community to go ahead with facilitating the globalization process unhindered. The Doha Declaration of November 2001 which mandated for launching of a new round, incorporates one of the complex and ambitious agenda on trade talks of the present century.<sup>6</sup> There are many bottlenecks in the smooth completion of the round though. The WTO Director-General, Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, in a recent report on the status of the negotiations painted a bleak picture:

These negotiations are in trouble. Very little of the political support which has been shown at successive Ministerial meetings has been turned into concrete progress in the negotiating groups. Everyone has a generalized commitment to progress, but when it comes

to the specifics, the familiar defensive positions take over.<sup>7</sup>

Ever since the Uruguay Round of the world trading system came to an end in 1994, there have been efforts to launch a new round of negotiations. In fact, the then President of America, Bill Clinton was even keen to have a round of negotiations after his name. For the long and arduous journey of trade negotiations in the eighth round had been characterized by so much of acrimony and bullying. The developing countries had to 'cave in' eventually to the tactics of the developed countries. There is no doubt that the UR was one of the longest ever trade talks undertaken by the world community. Following the signing of the Marrakesh Treaty, a whole series of issues have come up that needed attention. While the UR was one of those rounds, which took up, besides agriculture, three important new issues- Trade in Intellectual Property (TRIP), Trade Related Investment Measures (TRIM) and Services, the ending of last century and the beginning of present century continue to be alive to those issues. Another important dimension of the trade talks is that Agriculture and Textiles that were part of the UR still continue to dominate the present trade talks as well.

The object of the essay is to examine the present status of the trading arrangement vis-a-vis the developing countries. This essay will focus on the background of the present trade talks, which will provide the context for a perspective of the trade negotiations. In the second section, we will attempt to briefly highlight the salient points of the previous rounds of negotiations in the context of the developing countries. In the third section, we will discuss the eighth round, the Uruguay Round, which preceded the present round. The fourth section will analyze the Doha round negotiations for understanding the present position of the trade regime. Finally, in conclusion we will observe the need for greater flexibility on the part of the member countries of the world trade system to facilitate the globalization process with greater rigour.

## II. From Geneva Through Tokyo

This section will make a cursory perusal at the historical development of the world trade system since the ending of the World War II.<sup>8</sup> This will provide a perspective about the nature of the trading system that has been in place since then. Since the beginning of the present trading arrangement, the development dimension has been the key component in the trade talks. As early as the Suggested Charter that the U.S. circulated proposing for the creation of an international trade organization, reference to economic development have been there. In fact, a special chapter on Economic Development was inserted following negotiations in the Preparatory Committee for the Havana Conference.<sup>9</sup>

We will discuss the growth of the trading arrangement through the various rounds of the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs. Since the inception of the GATT, the predecessor of WTO, there were eight rounds of trade talks. The first five rounds of negotiations of the trade talks were more or less related to tariffs, with little attention paid to other issues.<sup>10</sup> Although the developing countries were clamouring for more concessions, there was not substantial

achievement in these rounds. One thing that has been noticed during these rounds though, was that the developing countries were rallying round support for projecting their object of getting some concessions from the developed countries.

It is interesting to note that the International Trade Organization, which was proposed in the Geneva Conference, had to be abandoned due to the inability of the U.S. to ratify it. The Havana Charter, which was the final text of the GATT to be approved in the third and final Conference at Havana, Cuba in 1947, had embodied provisions pertaining to the industrial development of backward areas and the flow of capital for productive investment. The foundation for the setting up of the ad hoc body, i.e. GATT, was laid down in the Second Preparatory Meeting in Geneva in April 1947. This ad hoc body, however, continued to exist for more than four decades and performed the function of a permanent organization. The structure that came into place became part of the newly re-christened multilateral trading arrangement called the World Trade Organization that came into being following the closing of the eighth round in Marrakesh.

Since the beginning there have been attempts by leading developing countries like India to extract concessions from the developed countries for economic development. As early as the 1946 London meeting India projected the Third World perspective on economic development. India also pleaded strongly for new international rights with respect to loans and access to the means of economic development. In the Geneva (1949), and Annency Round (1949) India negotiated with many developed countries for concessions to be offered and received in trade. In the Torquay Round (1951) also, ie. the third round, India exchanged concessions with more contracting parties. In the fourth round held in Geneva again in 1956, India did not take part, as it did not have much to offer in the form of tariff concessions. In the fifth round, the Dillon Round held at Geneva in 1960-1961, developing countries like India did take part actively. India submitted a number of concrete proposals to Committee to include in the rules on the negotiability of non-tariff measures like quotas, subsidies and internal taxes. The proposals were accepted after substantial discussion.<sup>11</sup>

In fact, the mood and temperament of the developing countries during the fifties and sixties in the 20th century were more or less analogous to what we witness today in the Doha round. There was much of camaraderie among the developing countries. Speaking on India's participation in the GATT, the then Commerce and Industry Minister said: "When restrictions are necessary in the interest of economic development and raising the standard of living, the mere fact that they would... restrict the volume of international trade, is not much of an argument against them."<sup>12</sup> The Indian delegate Mr. Helmi pointed out that the concept of 'infant industry' included in Article XVII was inadequate and restricted. The original text, he argued, did not make any distinction between the application of protection to aggregate categories of economy on the one hand, and to the specific industries on the other. The outcome of such a perspective was not so encouraging though, the developing countries,

including India, did make their point that made the members to deliberate upon the said provision and suggest for amendments.<sup>13</sup>

The Kennedy Round of trade negotiations during 1964-67 marked a significant departure from the previous five rounds of the GATT negotiations. In the earlier rounds, bargaining was done on selective item-by-item basis, and concessions were exchanged on reciprocal basis. The limitation of such approach was felt in the Dillon round, particularly with regard to the commodities from the developing countries. Thus, a linear approach involving tariff cuts across the board with a minimum exception was considered preferable. In October 1962, therefore, President Kennedy secured under the United States Trade Expansion Act the authority of the Congress to cut tariffs upto 50 percent subject to reciprocity, on an across the board basis. Still more significant is that in this round both the tariff and non-tariff barriers as well as industrial and non-industrial products including agriculture and primary products were discussed. The ground rules of the Kennedy Round took serious account of the special problems of the developing countries. It was understood that every effort would be made by the developed countries to make deeper than the stated 50 percent cuts on products of special export interest to the less-developed countries. Interestingly, however, many of the items of special interest to the developing countries had figured on the lists of exceptions of developed countries for reasons of 'overriding national interest'.<sup>14</sup> A year after the Kennedy Round came to an end, the United States in a major departure from its earlier position voted to support a Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) that would grant tariff preferences to all developing countries on products without demanding reciprocity. This was in contrast to what was contained in the Art. 1 of the GATT charter: reciprocity. This provision was waived off for a period of ten years. Although it took a few years for the real implementation of this proposal, this is a major achievement for the developing countries.

The international situation following the Kennedy Round seemed to be at cross-purposes with the interests of the developed countries. The late sixties and seventies saw the developed countries engaging in increasing protectionism due to their involvement in many third world crisis situations. The U.S. was deeply embroiled in the Vietnam War. The oil producing countries led by OPEC had increased oil prices manifold to the astonishment of the rich countries. The developing countries were clamouring for the adoption of new international economic order. The challenge to the GATT was also directly felt by the creation of the UNCTAD. In the backdrop of these developments, the Tokyo Round was introduced. The rich countries had to accept the voice of the poor countries. At the Ministerial Meeting in Tokyo, it was decided to provide protective discrimination to the developing countries. Accordingly, the Tokyo declaration provided the mandate for the purpose.<sup>15</sup>

The visible presence of the developing country perspective could be felt in the Tokyo Round to a great extent. There have been efforts since long to provide for the increased entrenchment of the Generalized System of Preferences, though. It was in 1976 that the

Group on Framework was established in the GATT. The Indian submission on the issue is very revealing.<sup>16</sup> Despite considerable opposition from the developing countries to the idea of preferential system, there was some acceptance to the differential and more favourable treatment. The essence of the special and differential treatment (s & d t) was the idea of graduation that would allow the developed countries to differentiate among the developing countries. The Tokyo Round definitely underscored the rising importance of the developing countries. One writer, thus, commented: "As time goes on, it begins to look more and more as if the momentum of the Tokyo Round proposals for greater legal discipline over developing countries has become spent and that the legal demands of developing countries have regained the initiative."

### III. Ther Uruguay Round

The Uruguay Round that preceded the present Doha Round was the eighth round of the trade negotiations. This was one of the longest rounds of trade talks so far in the history of trading regime. It was even suggested that this round would end all the rounds by bringing in even all the original GATT articles to review. The Uruguay Round began in 1986 at Punta del Este, Uruguay, and ended in 1994 at Marrakesh. Besides the traditional issues, this round for the first time took up new issues- Services, TRIPS and TRIMS- for negotiations. Also, this round witnessed one of the most comprehensive discussions on many important issues, which had dogged the world community for quite long time - textiles and agriculture. These two issues have been eluding the international community for quite long time due to various reasons; and specifically because of the apathetic attitude of the developed countries. While agriculture was dogged by protectionist measures, textiles trade was conducted under peculiar arrangement called Multi Fibre Agreement, which was in contravention of the GATT principle. In any case, a whole of series of these items came on the board for phasing out the distortions in trade. Still important, this round gave the final legal sanction for the creation of the World Trade Organization replacing the ad hoc body, GATT.

One important dimension of this round was that for the first time the developing countries projected their position with more of aggression than in the previous rounds. The three important actors like the U.S., EEC and Japan were no way calling the shots all the while, as the developing countries worked in compact with respect to various issues. As Denton and Laite suggested, "One new element in this Round is the ability of the LDC's to hold up agreement, since the industrial countries have important specific demands to put up them."<sup>18</sup> The way various groups, such as the Cairns Group<sup>19</sup>, and the Group of Ten<sup>20</sup>, were forcing their perspectives into the negotiating process suggested that the developing countries have graduated themselves from the status of bystanders to activists in the trading regime. As this author mentioned elsewhere, "Specifically, at the agenda-setting and rule-making stage, developing countries have played a very notable role in the Uruguay Round of negotiations."<sup>21</sup>

#### IV. DOHA ROUND

The Fourth Ministerial Meeting of world trade body came up with the declaration on the 20th November 2001, which incorporated economic development as the core issue in contrast to the previous rounds that did only lip service to economic development. The work program lists 21 items and all negotiation was to end by 1 January 2005. This could not meet the deadline as the talks are now deadlocked. It has definitely a "large, complex and ambitious agenda with a number of subjects/issues involving negotiations."<sup>22</sup> Although trade liberalization and elimination of trade barriers constitute the principle aim of the world trading regime, for the first time there is a realization that liberal international trade can be the engine for economic development in the developing countries. The Ministerial Declaration states:

International trade policy can play a major role in the promotion of economic development and alleviate the need for all peoples to benefit from the increased opportunities and welfare gains as the multilateral majority of WTO members are developing countries. We seek to place their needs and interests at the heart and adopted in this Declaration. Recalling the Preamble to the Marrakesh Agreement, we shall continue to make ensure that developing countries, and especially the least developed among them, secure a share in the growth commensurate with the needs of their economic development.<sup>23</sup>

Since the Doha Declaration 2001, there have been extensive works to conduct negotiations in different areas. Negotiations in specific areas include agriculture; services; market access for non-agricultural products; trade-related aspects of intellectual property; trade facilitation; WTO rules; improvements to Dispute Settlement Understanding; and trade and environment. There are some highly important issue areas on which there is hardly any negotiations: electronic commerce; small economies; trade; debt and finance; trade and transfer of technology; technological cooperation and capacity building; least-developed countries and special and differential treatment.<sup>24</sup> Added to the lengthy list of agenda, the U.S and EU have submitted for negotiations on the Singapore issues: investment, competition, transparency, and government procurement. We will, however, confine ourselves to discuss some of the key issues, such as Agriculture, Market Access Negotiations, Services and Special and Differential Treatment that concern the developing countries, specifically like India.

**Agriculture :** There have been sharp division between the developed and developing countries regarding reforms and liberalization of agriculture, particularly on the nature and extent of reduction in trade-distorting domestic support and improvement in market access. There has been opposition by members granting export subsidies to phase out such subsidies. The developed countries insist on minimal market access commitments in their sensitive products particularly from large and relatively more advanced developing countries. Although some progress has been made to remove all forms of agricultural export subsidies; there is still problem regarding the decision to set an end-date.<sup>25</sup>

The role of the Group of 20 (G-20) countries led by India is noteworthy. It has been able to bring into focus on removal of the distortions in agriculture due to high level of subsidies and resistance to reduce border protections in import sensitive products. The G-20 insisted that any new market access commitments on developing country must not cast a disproportionate higher burden on them as compared to developed countries. There is a need to provide sufficient safeguards to protect the food and livelihood security and rural development concerns. India has been arguing that a vast majority of its population is dependent on agriculture, which is characterized by subsistence and small farming. In order to protect the livelihood in agriculture and availability of food at affordable prices, India has been arguing for flexibility in domestic policies for agriculture to ensure food security and rural development.<sup>26</sup> Mr. Kamal Nath, Commerce Minister, Government of India, in his address to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting stated the position clearly.<sup>27</sup>

"The most profound structural distortions in international trade occurs in agriculture through huge domestic support and export subsidies that protect farmers in developed countries, even though agriculture accounts for less than 5% of output and employment in the U.S and EU. In contrast, two-thirds of all the poor people in developing countries depend on agriculture for their livelihood. .... They live on the edge of poverty and their income is barely one dollar per day."

India's position is that for creating a level-playing field in multilateral trade, the US should have "real cuts" in farm subsidies. Washington, however, put the blame on the European Union. The contentious issue in agricultural trade included in the perception of what India and the US consider as trade-distorting support and what is allowed in Green Box, which is non-trade distorting.<sup>28</sup> Even the Indian Commerce Minister threatened that India can live without a deal in Doha trade negotiations, rather than agree to a bad deal. India and other countries are not prepared to make sacrifices that will lead to "de-industrialization" and "de-stabilization"<sup>29</sup>. According to J. B. Penn, Under Secretary of State, US Department of Agriculture, "the world is now looking at EU to come up with improved proposals... So that the Doha round could move forward."<sup>30</sup>

**Non-agriculture Products :** Negotiations on market access of non-agricultural products (NAMA) have also lacked progress in evolving modalities and formulae for cutting tariffs. The deadline set for the purpose was May 31, 2003. The developing countries believed in offering tariff cuts on a formula-based approach on a less than reciprocity basis for them. The developing countries like the U.S. insist on scrapping all tariffs by 2015. The Indian proposal called for a simple percentage cut on bound tariff of each Member. India insists that developed countries reduce a higher percentage while developing countries may have two-thirds of the corresponding reduction in tariff by the developed countries. The draft proposal submitted by the Chairman of NAMA suggested for zero-for-zero commitment on seven major sectors including auto components, fish and fish products, textiles, gems and jewelry, leather products, and electric

and electronic goods. The draft proposal also suggested for special and differential and less than full reciprocity for developing countries. The developing countries, the draft suggested, can keep upto 5 per cent of their tariff lines unbound provided they do not exceed 5 per cent of their total value of imports. This line of mandated zero-for-zero import duty was not acceptable to India. The Cancun Ministerial Meeting had, however, suggested for 10 per cent of tariff lines that could have less than the formula-based levels of cuts. It also opened the scope for mandatory participation in sectoral initiative.

**Services :** The negotiations on services have been overshadowed by the deadlock in agriculture; and as such there is little substantial progress in the talks on services. India has submitted proposal covering both horizontal access as well as sectoral access in various sectors of services. India's request to various countries relate to architectural services, audio visual services, computer and related services, maritime services, tourism and travel related services, financial services, construction and related engineering services, and accounting and book keeping services. In fact, at the horizontal level India is concerned with the movement of natural persons which was the butt of contention in the Uruguay Round. Another key area is the cross border supply of services through electronic mode of delivery in a large number of service sectors.

There are around 68 initial and 24 revised offers that have been submitted by the members as of July 2005. There may have been some improvement in the quantity but "the overall quality remains unsatisfactory. Few, if any, provide new business opportunities to service suppliers. Most Members feel that the negotiations are not progressing as well as they should."<sup>31</sup>

**Special and Differential Treatment :** This issue has been one of the key issues of the development dimension of the Doha Round. In fact, s&d t has been figuring in the traded talks since the sixties of last century during the Kennedy and Tokyo Rounds of the GATT days. It has been agreed in the Doha Ministerial Declaration that special and differential treatment is an integral part of the WTO agreement. There were numerous constraints faced by the developing countries in operation of the provisions of special and differential treatment. In view of this, it was felt that the provisions of the agreement would be reviewed in the Doha round so that they become "precise, effective and operational." That is how it becomes part of the Decision on Implementation-Related Issues and Concerns of Doha mandate.

**The Implication :** It is seen from the various studies that the initial projections made by the World Bank and other agencies about the net gains for the developing countries seemed to flounder due to the statistical jugglery. There is now a realist picture emerging as the talk progress with respect to various issues that are being discussed. The main thrust of the Doha Round being the development objective of the developing countries, there is hardly any substantial gain for the developing countries *per se* in real terms. It is now reported that as per the latest projections of the World Bank study, the economic benefits are far smaller than earlier estimated, and developing countries will have gains of well under one percent of GDP.

According to one study, "the benefits are small for developing countries and the costs are high."<sup>32</sup> It has been suggested that the projections of the gains for the developing countries from full trade liberalisation fell from \$539 to just \$90.

In the agriculture sector, the developing country gain will be in the region of \$9 billion. The model projections now show that the major chunk of the share going to the high-income countries. There is no doubt that the gains for the more competitive economies will be more than expected. The developing countries will be squeezed for pursuing economic policies as effective strategies of development that were allowed under the previous dispensation. As a consequence of the proposal under the Doha Round, the poor countries will have no elbowroom to manoeuvre for development. Specifically in sectors like agriculture, services, intellectual property, and non-agricultural market access there would be hardly any space for the national governments to deploy any effective policy strategy for development. Interestingly, however, "half of the developing country benefits go to just eight countries: Brazil, Argentina, China, India, Thailand, Vietnam, Mexico and Turkey."<sup>33</sup>

**Table 1. Benefits of "likely" Doha Round Scenario**

|                                | Beneficiary Region |            |         |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|------------|---------|
|                                | High Income        | Developing | World   |
| Welfare Gain<br>Total amounts, | 80                 | 16         | 96      |
| Per Capit                      | \$ 79.04           | \$ 3.13    | \$15.67 |
| Percentage of GDP              | 0.24%              | 0.14%      | 0.23%   |

Source: Anderson K. And W. Martin, "Agriculture Trade Reform and the Doha Development Agenda," *World Economy*, September 2005, Table 10, p 1319; Quoted in RIS Policy Briefs #19, New Delhi. P.2

#### V. Conclusion

The discussions in the foregoing sections drive home the point that the multilateral trading system has come a long way. It has been evolving and keeping pace with the changing needs of the time. Especially, the efforts of the developing countries to make it broad-based and effective to cater to their needs seem to be gaining ground. There is no doubt that in none of the rounds the developing country has upper hand in setting up the rules. The developing country perspectives that have been evolving over the years, however, seem to have its impact since the beginning. The rich countries may have gained out of the multilateral system. The real gain for them has been even beyond this structure that has been there since the Bretton Woods days. In fact, it is for the developing countries that are now integrating their economies

with the global economy, an effective trading regime is highly important. It is another matter if some countries extract concessions from the rich countries through bilateral arrangements. A multilateral trading regime, however, is an essential element in the present multi-polar economic system.

The Doha Round may have started with a bang, with a lot of promise for the developing countries by adopting it as "Development Round." Although since the beginning some developing countries have been exerting the world body to incorporate the development dimension as one of the objectives of the trading system. There were many half-hearted attempts to do so. This time, however, with the increasing force of globalisation and liberalisation of almost all developing countries the Doha Round seemed to be befittingly adopting development as the key element. The progress of the talks, however, seems to move in the direction that is beyond the original mandate. This supervenes the earlier positions of the contracting parties of the WTO. The outcome does not seem to be too well for the developing countries. As one study suggested,

*"The round began with vows to enable poorer nations to develop their economies. The deal taking shape now offers limited economic gains for the developing world, and many countries end up worse off, according to recent economic projections. Hidden behind those modest benefits are costs that should give negotiations pause. Tariff losses and other "adjustment costs" may be prohibitively high, some countries will experience a loss in national production after opening their manufacturing and service sectors to rich-country competition, and all face the loss of autonomy to pursue the kind of national development policies that have proven effective in the past."*<sup>34</sup>

The crux of the matter is that development as such has been undergoing a paradigm shift. The development dimension has been changing.<sup>35</sup> Now international trade has been accepted as an engine of growth. There is also shift from assets based on commodity to assets based on knowledge. With globalisation and liberalisation, the developing countries have been adopting newer strategies for economic development. The earlier inward oriented strategy for economic development has been bidden good-bye. Now the developing countries have been keen to do international trade. There is decisive shift in the focus in the macro economic policies. The new economic policies may be too daunting; but there is no other go but to integrate with the world economy, which in other words, means to be part of the multilateral trading arrangement. The initial costs may be higher. In the long run, these economies will cope up with the loss and hopefully develop keeping pace with developments in the world economy. In this context, the Doha Round is a pointer in the direction.

#### END NOTES

1. For the structure and organization of the world trade system see my article, "The World Trade System: the Structure and Organizations," India Quarterly, Vol. LVI, Nos. 3-4. July-Dec. 2000.

2. See my book, India and the GATT: the Origin, Growth and Development (New Delhi: A.P.H. Co 1997)
3. The 'additional details'

These agreements and annexes deal with the following specific sectors or issues :

For goods (under GATT)

- Agriculture
- Health regulations for farm products (SPS)
- Textiles and clothing
- Product standards (TBT)
- Investment measures
- Anti-dumping measures
- Customs valuation methods
- Preshipment inspection
- Rules of origin
- Import licensing
- Subsidies and counter-measures
- Safeguards

For services (the GATS annexes)

- Movement of natural persons
- Air transport
- Financial services
- Shipping
- Telecommunications

Source: World Trade Organization, Understanding the WTO, 3rd Edition, September 2003. p.22

4. About two thirds of the WTO's around 146 members are developing countries.
5. "Given the widespread slippages in the timeline on these negotiations and the current stalemate, progress under the Doha round so far has been slow, putting a question mark on the feasibility of timely completion of the Round." See <http://indiabudget.nic.in>
6. At the Fourth Ministerial Conference in Doha, Qatar, in November 2001 WTO member governments agreed to launch new negotiations. They also agreed to work on other issues in particular the implementation of the present agreements. The entire package

is called Doha Development Agenda (DDA). See [www.wto.org> trade topics>Doha Development Agenda](http://www.wto.org/trade/topics/Doha_Development_Agenda.htm)

7. Speech by Director-General, Dr. Supachai Panichpakdi, at an informal meeting at the level of Heads of Delegation, 8 July 2005 ([http://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/esp/sps40\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/esp/sps40_e.htm))
8. This section draws heavily from my book, India and GATT: Origin Growth and Dimension, op. cit. Ch-5.
9. Kenneth W. Dam, The GATT: Law and the International Economic Organization (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970), p.225.
10. The first five rounds are: 1.Geneva (1947); 2. Annency (1949); 3.Torquay (1959); 4.Geneva (1956); 5. Dillon round (1960-61). The Sixth round is the Kennedy Round (1964-47) and Seventh Round was the Tokyo Round (1974-1979).
11. The recommendations adopted by the Committee for the Conference included (i) the protection afforded through the operation of imports monopolies; (ii) internal quantitative regulations as provided in paragraph 7 of Article III; (iii) import restrictions as provided in Article IV; (iv)import restrictions as provided in paragraph 2 © of Article XI; (v) the level of subsidy which operates directly or indirectly to reduce imports; (iv) internal taxes
12. Quoted in S.K. Srivastava, Trade of India (Delhi: S Chand & Co. 1956), p. 250.
13. As the GATT report suggested: "Essentially, the review resulted in a reaffirmation of the cardinal rules of the Agreement. The amendments that were adopted were designed to make them in some cases more flexible and in other cases firmer, depending upon the lessons of practical experience. But in no case were the fundamental principles discarded." See GATT, International Trade 1954, (Geneva 1955), p.129
14. Ernest H. Preeg, Traders and Diplomats: An analysis of the Kennedy round under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (Washington, D.C: The Brookings Institution, 1970), p. 131.
15. "The Ministers recognize the need for special measures to be taken in the negotiations to assist the developing countries in their efforts to increase their export earnings and promote their economic development... They also recognize the importance of maintaining and improving Generalized System of Preferences. They further recognize the importance of the application of differential measures to developing countries in ways which will provide special and more favorable treatment for them in areas of the negotiations where this is feasible and appropriate." GATT, BISD, 20th Supplement, para5. p.19
16. "The Indian submission expounded: We are not suggesting the discarding of the m. f .n

principles, but an evolving concept of the m. f. n principle which would recognize and incorporate the compulsions arising from the economic and development needs of the developing countries." GATT Document, MTN/ FR/W/9, 19 April 1977, Para 8.

17. Robert E. Hudec, Developing Countries in the GATT Legal System (London: Gower, for the Trade Policy Research Center, 1987), *Thames Essay no. 50*, p. 90
18. Geoffrey Denton and Julian Laite, *The Uruguay GATT Round: Freeing World Trade in Manufacturing, agriculture, Services and Investment*, Wilton Park Papers 3 (London: HMSO, 1990&91), pp. 3-4
19. Cairns Group is a coalition of fourteen agricultural exporting countries from both developed and developing countries. It consists of Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Fiji, Hungary, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand, and Uruguay.
20. The Group of Ten was originally identified as "hard liner" countries. Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Egypt, India, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Peru, Tanzania and Yugoslavia. However, Argentina withdrew from the group as negotiations progressed; while Yugoslavia was facing a bloody civil war.
21. See my book, *India and the GATT*, op. cit. P.116.
22. <http://indiabudget.nic.in>. p.115
23. WT/MIN (01)/DEC.1 (20November 2001)
24. "Some progress has been made in Agriculture. While the AVE (ad valorem equivalent) issue has been unblocked, this has not yet sufficiently galvanized the negotiations on the most fundamental element of the market access package, the tiered formula for tariff cuts, although some progress has just been made on other aspects of the market access pillar. Some progress has also been made on domestic support and, to a lesser extent, on export competition. Of course, it remains important to advance work on all three pillars, although some sequencing is necessary for that to happen.

In the NAMA negotiations, while there were some hopeful signs in June, but now positions appear to be hardening. I fear that the obvious constraint here is still lack of progress on Agriculture.

In the Services negotiations, while the situation has improved since the May TNC in terms of numbers of initial and revised offers, the quality of the offers continues to be poor. It remains for the membership to see how to take these negotiations forward to Hong Kong.

In the Rules areas, including Trade Facilitation, we still need to consolidate the wide range of ideas on the table to prepare the ground for further progress in most areas. That said, some useful progress has recently been made on Trade Facilitation and in the Regional Trade Agreement track in the Rules Group. See Speech by Director-General, Dr. Supachai Panichpakdi, at an informal meeting at the level of Heads of Delegation, 8 July 2005 ([http://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/esp/sps40\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/esp/sps40_e.htm)

25. For a discussion on the developing country perspective see, Devinder Sharma, "Protecting Agriculture: "Zero-Tolerance" on Farm Subsidies, "<http://www.globalpolicy.org/globalizecon/2003/0205 zero.htm>, dt.10/22/2005.
26. <http://indiabudget.nic.in>. p.115
27. [http://pib.nic/release/re\\_print\\_page1.asp?relid](http://pib.nic/release/re_print_page1.asp?relid), dt.11/27/2005.
28. <http://www.outlookindia.com> , 11/27/2005
29. D.RaviKanth, "Square meal issue in Doha Round," The Mizoram Post, dt.5 May 2006, p. 4.
30. ibid
31. Minutes of Video Conference February 21, 2005 jointly organized by PnWB Trade and the World Bank, Quoted in "Completing the Doha Round Development Agenda- A Background Paper Presented by the Commonwealth Association," 25th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference of Member from Small Countries, Nadi, Fiji Islands, 3 to 4 September 2005, Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. p 4
32. Timothy A. Wise and Kevin P. Gallagher, Doha Round and Developing countries: Will the Doha deal do more harm than good? RIS Policy Briefs; no. 22, April 2006, p. 4.
33. Timothy A. Wise and Kevin P. Gallagher, Doha Round's Development Impacts: Shrinking Gains and Real Costs, RIS Policy Briefs #19, New Delhi. P.2
34. Timothy A. Wise and Kevin P. Gallagher, Doha Round and Developing countries: Will the Doha deal do more harm than good? Op .cit
35. According to Wise and Gallagher, "the Doha Round has strayed form its development mission." See note 32, p.3.

## ELECTION TREND IN BAY ISLANDS' PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY : A STUDY

S.K. Biswas

*Democracy is the voice of people or mass. The Indian democracy is the largest and richest in the sense that more than 50 crores of voters are participating in parliamentary democratic process by electing their representatives. The political activities in the Islands and voters perception started with the introduction of parliamentary election in late sixties. The national political atmosphere has always impressed the Islands' politics and its results have been affecting the politics and political milieu of these Islands. Though religions and castes have no traces on the process of election campaign in these Islands, languages or community has succeeded to have its traces or election of different political parties.*

### INTRODUCTION

A success behind every democratic force is people's verdict. People's voice is the power of democratic representative governments. India feels proud to be a largest and successful parliamentary system with responsible government. Indian national movement was mechanized with a hope, that the India would be liberated with a strong sovereign democratic country. The people representative houses should be the core of its functionaries. Therefore the framers of the Indian Constitution has laid importance over the de-centralization of power through electorate systems. Each state should be worked with the principle of equal responsibilities towards its citizens and be respectful toward the commitments of the Constitutions. Federal structure was the best choice to the people of free India. The history of Indian democracy and parliamentary form of government is affirmative and exemplary before world countries. Because in this parliamentary system more than 55 cores of voters are eligible to exercise their votes to form government. Every 5 years 4081 members are elected for 25 Assembly of 25 state of the Indian Union. 545 Lok Sabha members are elected by the equal number of voters in every five years (Statesman Year Book, 2004). In the parliamentary government, each of the constituencies and its voters are equally important, and contribute in making union/state government meaningful. Hence, the single Lok Sabha constituency of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, a Union Territory (U.T), has its empirical importance in enriching the heritage of the Indian democracy. Being a part of, Indian union, the voters of this constituency have every right to preserve the significance of the Indian political force. Participation in the election process by contributing through their political rights, is the rightful right of the islands' citizens. The geographical isolation is not a barrier to uphold the dignity of Indianisation through the exercise of adult franchise. Hence, an empirical study is required, to assess the importance of parliamentary process among Indian voters who composed a different multi-ethnic society.

**GEOGRAPHY & ECOLOGY –**The Andaman & Nicobar Islands (ANI), a U.T. of India lie in the Bay of Bengal, between 92° and 94° east longitudes and 60° and 140° north latitudes. These Islands comprising several big and small ones lie in the north-south direction. According to the 1981 census by the A&N Administration, only 38 of these are inhabited. The A&N

groups of Islands are separated by a 190km stretch of sea, at the center of which in the other turbulent Ten Degree Channel, which is 145 km wide and 400 fathoms deep. The Andaman group covers an area of 6340 sq.km. And Nicobar group covers 1953 sq. km.<sup>1</sup>

#### POPULATION PROFILE :

The total population of these Islands as per 2001 census is 356265. The population can be divided into three main categories. The autochthons, namely the Great Andamanese, Ongis, Jarawas and Sentinels of the Andamans and the Nicobarese and Shompens of Nicobar constitute the first category. The second category is of settler groups mainly comprising the Bengalis, Moplahs, Bhatus, Ranchi (Tribals from Chota Nagpur, Bihar), Local born Andaman Indians (Progenies of early settlers who were earlier brought as Convicts), Karen, Malayalee, etc. The third category, a sizable one, consists of those who came to the Islands by virtue of their being in service trade and industry (R.S. Mann-1980 has aptly termed them as floating populations.)

Though ANI is a far-flung Union Territory and many Indians known nothing about it, yet it occupies a very significant and strategic position for its geographical location. As these are islands in the sea towards the south – east end of India, it is significant from the viewpoint of defence of the country. There was also the influx of a huge number of people from the mainland for various purposes. These people brought with them much diversity as regards languages, culture, and religion and many others. They have grown a peculiar homogeneity amongst them and one can see the real unity in diversity in these Islands.

But with the passage of time, the society is becoming more and more complex. The rapid inflation in the size of the population and the changing social, political and economic life in ANI is required to be investigated for the purpose of knowing the changes that have occurred in the political behaviour of the Islands.

The study remains concentrated on the following aspects of political life of the people of these Islands.

1. To study the existing political system of ANI
2. To study the behaviour of the voters to elect their representatives.
3. To know the voting behaviour of the people of these Islands.
4. To know the role of variables like language, religion, caste and education in election or in the political life of the people.
5. To know the factors conditioning the voting behaviour of the people of the Islands.
6. To give suggestion for growing ideal democratic attitude in the voters.

**METHODOLOGY APPLIED IN THE PRESENT STUDY :**

The study is an empirical one. An attempt has been made to analyse the election trend in existence in A&N Islands Parliamentary Constituency, and to come up with the appropriate suggestions so as to make the trend a healthy one in the democratic set up of the nation.

**STAGES OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT :**

Before 1951, the people of these Islands were deprived of any political activities and there was no political institution in these Islands. Under the Representation of People Act 1951, the Islands was allotted one seat in the Lok Sabha, which was to be filled by a person nominated by the President of India. As such Bishop John Richardson represented the Islands in the first, Shri Lechman Singh in the second and Shri. Nirjan Lal represented the Islands in the third Lok Sabha.

The first election on the basis of political parties was held in 1967 in ANI and Shri. K.R. Ganesh from the Congress party was the first elected representative in the Lok Sabha.

In 1967 and 1971 general elections, only few thousands islanders exercised their voting rights with limited choice. Because, other than Congress party candidate Mr. K.R. Ganesh, and Swatantra Party candidate Mr. R.L. Saha, no candidates could manage to get any party tickets. Mr. PKS Prasad and K. Kandaswami and other fought as independent candidates. The troubles and turmoils in the history of Congress party at all India level did not have much effect on the popularity of the party in these Islands. Though force and presence of opposition was first felt by the Congress party in the election of 1977 when the expelled ex-M.P. of congress Party Mr. K.R. Ganesh stood against the newly nominated Congress candidate Mr. M.R. Bhakta. Inspite of the solid backing of the entire opposition including DMK and CPM Shri. K.R. Ganesh failed to retain his seat. The CPM, as national party enrooted its supporter among some Bengali and Malayalee people who came over these Islands in connection with some business or government job. The DMK a Tamilian based regional party in Tamil Nadu, enrooted its base among Tamil people in the Islands.

The participation and performance of the candidates in Andaman & Nicobar Islands parliamentary constituency from 1980 to 2004 :

TABLE NO - 1

| Year of<br>Election | No. of<br>Voters | Valid votes<br>caste | Name of<br>Candidates | Party<br>affiliation | Votes<br>secured |
|---------------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| 1980                | 96084            | 78899                | K. Kandaswamy         | Independent          | 15856            |
|                     |                  |                      | Kanu Chamy            | Independent          | 405              |
|                     |                  |                      | Karpu Swamy           | Independent          | 1123             |
|                     |                  |                      | P.K.S. Prasad         | CPI (M)              | 16014            |
|                     |                  |                      | M.R. Bhakta           | INC                  | 42046            |
|                     |                  |                      | Ramesh Mazumder       | Independent          | 109              |
|                     |                  |                      | K.N. Raju             | Independent          | 470              |
|                     |                  |                      | R.L. Saha             | Independent          | 717              |
|                     |                  |                      | Samar Choudhari       | Independent          | 2034             |
|                     |                  |                      | Alagiri Swamy         | Independent          | 125              |
| 1984                | 1155.65          | 88968                | M.R. Bhakta           | INC                  | 47019            |
|                     |                  |                      | K. Kandaswamy         | LKD                  | 27883            |
|                     |                  |                      | Nilima Das            | CPI(M)               | 11086            |
|                     |                  |                      | A.A.J.Hazra           | Independent          | 1695             |
|                     |                  |                      | Mahananda Biswas      | Independent          | 780              |
|                     |                  |                      | Kandaswamy            | Independent          | 505              |
| 1989                | 1,69,940         | 1,13,065             | K. Kandaswamy         | IC(Socialist)        | 19172            |
|                     |                  |                      | Zabaida Bibi          | Independent          | 553              |
|                     |                  |                      | Tapan Bepari          | CPI(M)               | 34,469           |
|                     |                  |                      | M.R. Bhakta           | INC                  | 53383            |
|                     |                  |                      | S.M. J. Maricar       | Independent          | 4457             |
|                     |                  |                      | Robert R.             | Independent          | 806              |
|                     |                  |                      | Shareef J.B.          | Independent          | 225              |
| 1991                | 169120           | 107316               | M.R. Bhakta           | INC                  | 54,075           |

Election Trend in Bay Island's Parliamentary Constituency

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|      |        |        |                       |             |        |
|------|--------|--------|-----------------------|-------------|--------|
|      |        |        | Tapan Kr. Bepari      | CPI(M)      | 4737   |
|      |        |        | Bishnupada Roy        | BJP         | 5708   |
|      |        |        | Balakrishna Nair.S.V. | Independent | 454    |
|      |        |        | Shareef J.B.          | Independent | 205    |
| 1996 | 211226 | 128212 | M.R.Bhakta            | INC         | 74642  |
|      |        |        | Bishnupada Roy        | B.J.P.      | 31097  |
|      |        |        | Tapan kr. Bepari      | CPI(M)      | 18363  |
|      |        |        | Sundaram S.N.         | Independent | 927    |
|      |        |        | Vinod Kr. Gupta       | Independent | 707    |
|      |        |        | Mathews P.A. Dr       | Independent | 544    |
|      |        |        | Mohan N.B.            | Independent | 527    |
|      |        |        | Kalimuthu             | Independent | 511    |
|      |        |        | Sarvanarayana Rao, S. | Independent | 448    |
|      |        |        | Balraj S.A.           | Independent | 258    |
|      |        |        | Sahreef J.B.          | Independent | 188    |
| 1998 | 232013 | 145836 | M.R. Bhakta           | INC         | 52,365 |
|      |        |        | Bishnupada Roy        | BJP         | 51,281 |
|      |        |        | Kuldeep Rai Sharma    | ANC         | 29,687 |
|      |        |        | Tapan Kr. Bepari      | CPI(M)      | 8,272  |
|      |        |        | Henry                 | Independent | 3,509  |
|      |        |        | Kalimuthu Dever K.    | Independent | 182    |
| 1999 | 247384 | 145791 | Bishnu Pada Ray       | BJP         | 76,891 |
|      |        |        | M.R. Bhakta           | INC         | 62,944 |
|      |        |        | Agapit Kujur          | Independent | 4,805  |
|      |        |        | Uma Bharathi          | NCP         | 1,015  |
|      |        |        | Kalimuthu Dever K.    | Independent | 136    |

|      |        |        |                |             |        |
|------|--------|--------|----------------|-------------|--------|
| 2004 | 241353 | 153826 | M.R. Bhakta    | INC         | 85,794 |
|      |        |        | Bishnupada Roy | BJP         | 55,294 |
|      |        |        | Tapan Bepari   | CPM         | 4,175  |
|      |        |        | Uma Bharati    | NCP         | 2,364  |
|      |        |        | S. Nair        | Independent | 1448   |
|      |        |        | Deepak Biswas  | Independent | 1186   |
|      |        |        | A.K. Biswas    | BSP         | 1122   |

Source : Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Andaman and Nicobar Administration, Port Blair.

The table gives us a very vivid picture of last eight Lok Sabha elections held from 1980 to 2004 in these Islands. In the Lok Sabha election of 1980, as on the one hand a large number of candidates contested the election breaking all the previous precedents, on the other hand Congress (I) candidate was not challenged by any new national or regional political party candidates. Eight independent candidates, for the first time, also tried out their political fate in this election. This election was symbolic to the fact that the political aspiration started to sprout in the heart of the islanders having leadership characteristics.

In the election of 1984, Shri. K. Kandaswamy who fought election as an independent candidate in 1980 managed to be affiliated with Lok Dal and was put as a Lok Dal candidate. A new political party as such took entry in the political activities of these Islands. It was an indication that the political parties were interested to capture the political field of these far-flung Islands with their party influence in the mainland. However, the Lok Dal candidate Shri. K. Kandaswamy succeeded to bag a good number votes, i.e. 27883 and won the 2nd position amongst the contestants, he could not defeat the Congress (I) candidate Shri. M.R. Bhakta. Shri. K. Kandaswamy being from Tamil Nadu won the support of many Tamil speaking people who were basically affiliated with D.M.K.

In the general election of 1989 a new political party India Congress (IC) (Socialist) put its candidate. Shri. K. Kandaswamy, leaving the affiliation with the Lok Dal, joined in Socialist Congress but could not show a good performance. Here one important point is notable that Shri. K. Kandaswamy did not keep himself attached to a particular political party and in every election he joined or supported a new party. In this election CPI (M) candidate Shri. Tapan Kr.

Bepari, though could not win the election, succeeded to prove his emphatic position by bagging 34469 votes.

The four independent candidates secured only 6041 votes, which passes the message that the voters of these Islands do not have faith in independent candidates. In this election also Shri. M.R. Bhakta, Congress (I) won the election by a good margin.

In the election of 1991, the total number of contestants for only one M.P. seat of these Islands was five only. There was an open contest between the Congress candidates Shri. M.R. Bhakta and the CPI (M) candidate Shri. Tapan Kr. Bepari. Both the candidates were from settler family of East Bengal. In this election also Shri. Tapan Kr. Bepari enhanced his popularity among the voters and bagged 47374 votes which was about 13000 more than the votes he secured in the previous election. Though the Congress was seeing a danger in near future, Shri. M.R. Bhakta was again elected for the fifth time from this constituency. Bharatiya Janata Party, which came into being in 1980, had no trace on the political scenario of the Islands. Shri. Bishnupada Roy though not from settler family got nomination of Bharatiya Janata Party as its candidate in this election. In this election he got a very impertinent portion of the total votes cast, i.e. 5708. The two independent candidates Balakrishna Nair S.V. and Shri. Shareef J.B. bagged only 659 votes in total.

In the general election of 1996 the number of contestants were eleven which was the maximum number of the contestants upto the 13th Lok Sabha election in 1999. But of these eleven candidates, only three were from national political parties i.e. INC, B.J.P. and CPI (M). The number of total valid votes was 128,212; the INC candidate Shri. M.R. Bhakta secured 74,742 votes; Shri. Bishnupada Roy of BJP secured 31,097 votes; and the CPI (M) candidate secured 18,363 votes. The notable things in this election is that while CPI(M) secured less than half the votes they secured in the previous election (1991), BJP multiplied their popularity by about six times. It was a clear indication that BJP candidate was winning over the faith of the voters in an unprecedented ratio. It was again an alarming situation to the Congress (I) candidate. The remaining eight independent candidates secured only 4110 votes in total. Here one more thing can be pointed out that the independent candidates, whatever may their social status or individual qualities be, never succeeded to win over the faith of the Islands voters.

In the mid-term election of 1998 there were six candidates to contest for the single seat. Out of these six candidates, three were from national political parties, one was from newly formed regional party Andaman & Nicobar Congress. The remaining two were independent candidates. The supporters of newly emerged party (ANC) put Shri. Kuldeep Rai Sharma, an engineering graduate, as their candidate. Inspite of strong backing of Pre-42 settlers locally known as "local born community", could not show a very good result in the election. He secured only 29,687 votes. It happened so due to two reasons.

First, the local born community comprises a very little portion of the total population of the Islands. Secondly, the people of this community have had a strong tie with the Congress party from very beginning. The real contest, in this election was between the candidates of Congress (I) and BJP Shri. M.R. Bhakta and Shri. Bishnupada Roy respectively. However there was an expectation that the BJP candidate would win the election as BJP was expected to form the government at centre, but this time also Congress (I) candidate won the election by a very narrow margin. The difference of votes was only 544. The Congress candidate never won the election by such a narrow margin since 1967. It was a clear indication that an anti-Congress wind was blowing through out the Islands and the people wanted a change in the leadership. The CPI (M) also lost their hold on the voters in an unexpected manner. The BJP candidate and workers did not leave any shortcoming in availing the opportunity. In the meantime, government was formed at the centre under the leadership of BJP. After 13 months only, the BJP led government fell at centre for being defeated in no-confidence motion moved by the united opposition force.

The election of 1999 was a golden opportunity for the candidate of Bharatiya Janata Party. As it had been the trend of the Islands that the islanders always imitate the national political flow, many voters who voted in favour of other party in the previous election, now voted for BJP sponsored candidate. It was so because they want to see the BJP government at the centre. As such more than 50% voters favoured the BJP candidate. Bagging 76,891 votes he defeated the Congress (I) candidate by 13947 votes. With this a new trend in the election of A&N Islands was been. But in 2004 election, INC candidate M.R. Bhakta came back in Islands politics as M.P. by defeating his nearest contestant the sitting M.P. Mr. Roy by a havoc margin.

**TABLE NO - 2**  
**2. VOTING PATTERN IN ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS LOK SABHA CONSTITUENCY (1980-2004).**

| Year | No. Of Votes | Vote Cast | Valid Votes Cast | Name Of The Parties Contested In The Election (1980-2004) |        |         |        |                |               | Name Of Winning Party |
|------|--------------|-----------|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------|---------|--------|----------------|---------------|-----------------------|
|      |              |           |                  | Congress(I)                                               | CPI(I) | Lok Dal | B.J.P. | IC (Socialist) | ANC /NCP      |                       |
| 1980 | 96084        | 81146     | 78899            | 42046                                                     | 16014  | -       | -      | -              | -             | Congress I            |
| 1984 | 115565       | 91093     | 88968            | 47019                                                     | 11086  | 27883   | -      | -              | -             | 2980                  |
| 1989 | 16940        | 115409    | 113065           | 43383                                                     | 34464  | -       | -      | 19172          | -             | Congress I            |
| 1991 | 169120       | 108822    | 107316           | 54075                                                     | 47374  | -       | 5208   | -              | -             | 659                   |
| 1996 | 211226       | 130918    | 128212           | 74642                                                     | 18363  | -       | 31097  | -              | -             | 4110                  |
| 1998 | 232013       | 147698    | 145836           | 52365                                                     | 8272   | -       | 51821  | -              | 29687         | Congress I            |
| 1999 | 247384       | 147102    | 145791           | 62944                                                     | -      | -       | 76891  | -              | -             | 5956                  |
| 2004 | 241353       | 154170    | 153826           | 85794                                                     | 4175   | -       | 55294  | -              | 2364<br>(NCP) | Congress I            |

SOURCE : Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Andaman and Nicobar Administration, Port Blair.

**PARTY PERFORMANCE IN THE LOK SABHA ELECTION :**

The record of last eight consecutive parliamentary elections (from 1980-2004) (Table - 2) shows that the faith of the electorates remained clung to Congress party upto the General Election of 1998. It also symbolizes the declining popularity of the party in every election except 1996 election. In the election of 1980, out of 96,084 voters only 81146 voters exercised their franchise. Congress (I), in this election, bagged 42046 (more than 50% of total votes polled), CPI(M) 16014 and others bagged 20,839 votes; 2247 voters could not exercise their franchise in valid way.

In 1984 election, the number of voters was 1,15,565, out of which 91,093 votes was polled. In this election also Congress (I) succeeded to bag 47,019 (more than 50% of polled votes), CPI (M) 11,086 and Lok Dal bagged 27,883 votes. Independent candidates secured 2980 votes altogether.

In 1989 Parliamentary Elections, the number of voters increased by about 45,293. This heavy increase in the number of voters was due to reduction of age bar from 21 years to 18 years. In this election, total votes stood at 160940 while 115409 voters exercised their franchise; out of which Congress (I) got 53,383 (less than 50% of polled votes first time), CPI(M) got 34,469 votes and IC(Socialist) secured 19172 votes, others secured 6041 votes; 2338 votes were found invalid and 6 votes were missing.

In 1991 mid-term Lok Sabha election the number of voters were 1,69,038, out of which only 108822 voters exercised their franchise. A notable decrease in exercise of franchise was found in this election. Another remarkable incident, which took place in this election, was the emergence of BJP in Andaman and Nicobar Islands politics for the first time. According to polling record of this election, Congress (I) candidate M.R. Bhakta won the election bagging 54,075 votes, CPI(M) bagged 47,374 votes and BJP got 5,208 votes. In this election, CPI(M) candidate Tapan Kumar Bepari from a settler family of East Bengal refugee, though succeeded to prove himself a popular leader, failed to defeat the Congress (I) candidates as the islanders sensed the Congress led government at the centre.

In 1996 Lok Sabha election, the number of voters reached to 2,11,226 in these Islands. But only 1,30,918 voters turned out to exercise their franchise. In this election, Congress (I) got 74,642 votes, CPI (M) got 18,363 votes, BJP got 31,097 votes and others got only 4110 votes. Performance of Congress (I) improved as CPI (M) could not do well in this election.

In the mid-term election held in February 1998, the number of total voters was 232013 and the number of votes polled was 147698. Among these polled votes Congress (I) got 52,365, BJP got 51821, and the newly emerged regional party Andaman & Nicobar Congress

got 29,687 votes. The birth of this new regional party was due to the split in Congress (I). In this election Congress (I) candidate won the election by a very narrow margin and the result was an alarming threat to the candidate of Congress (I). The winning of Congress (I) candidate by a very narrow margin was due to two reasons. First an anti-congress wave was blowing all over there in the mainland and the Islanders sensed BJP led government at the centre.

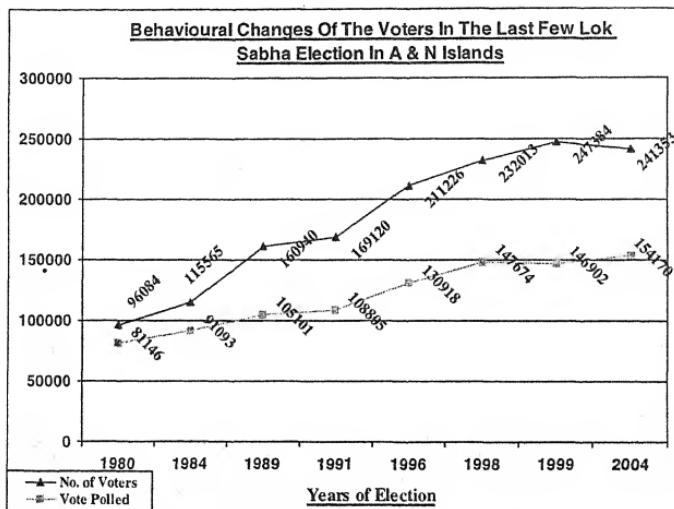
The second reason was that of the splitting party. A well-organised group of local born people sidelined themselves due to some internal disputes of the party in the name of Andaman & Nicobar Congress.

In the mid-term election of September 1999, the total number of voters in these Islands were 247384, of which 147102 voters cast their votes. Congress party bagged 62,944 votes, BJP bagged 76,891 votes and others got only 5956 votes. It was the first time in the parliamentary election in Andaman & Nicobar Islands that the Congress party candidate was defeated by the candidate of other party. It reveals the real trend of the voting behaviour of voters of these Islands and establishes a concrete base of the trend of the voters imitating the national political flow. The voters sensed the increasing popularity of the BJP in the mainland and prepared themselves for saying goodbye to the old Congress candidate who for decades had succeeded to win the faith of the voters of these Islands.

Thus, the national political atmosphere has always impressed the Islands politics and its result has been affecting the political atmosphere of these Islands since the very beginning. In the election of 1998, the islanders were in dilemma and lastly majority voter voted in favour of Congress (I) candidate. When the result was flashed the people understood the political atmosphere of the country and made up their mind to support the party, which was forming government at centre. The chance came immediately to the voters to rectify themselves in the mid-term election of 1999. They voted in favour of BJP and made its candidate victorious. However, in the last election (2004), the INC got a favourable atmosphere against NDA government. Therefore, the INC candidate M.R. Bhakta re-gained his power in 2004 Parliamentary election by defeated BJP candidate by a margin of 30500 votes.

Thus, the Table - 2 not only shows the political party affiliation of the voters of these Islands but also shows the increasing rate of voters in every election. It is evident that the number of voters has increased in every election in a considerable measure. The important reason of this increase in number of voters is not due to increase in birth rate but due to the migration of people from the mainland to these Islands.

## VOTING BEHAVIOUR OF THE VOTERS (GRAPH - 1)



SOURCE : Office of the Chief Electoral officer, A & N Administration, Port Blair.

Graph 1 reveals another aspect of voting-behavioural trends of the people of the Islands in last eight consecutive Lok Sabha elections. It is observed from the records shown in graph 1 that in every election when the number of voters have increased, the percentage of voters turning out for exercising franchise has decreased in considerable measures from 1980 to 2004. The cause of increasing number of voters are due to migration of people from the mainland to these Islands and the reduction in age bar of adult franchise from 21 years to 18 years in 1989 elections.

In 1980 parliamentary election the number of voters in Andaman and Nicobar Islands was 96,084, among which only 81,146 voters exercised their franchise meaning that 84% voters cast their votes.

In 1984 general election, the number of voters increased by 19,481 and total voters became 1,15,565, out of which 91,093, voters exercised their votes and it was 79% of the total voters.

In 1989 parliamentary elections the number of voters increased very much to near about by 45,293. In this election the total voters in Andaman & Nicobar Islands were 1,60,940, and the voters who exercised their franchise were 1,15,409, which was 72% of the total voters.

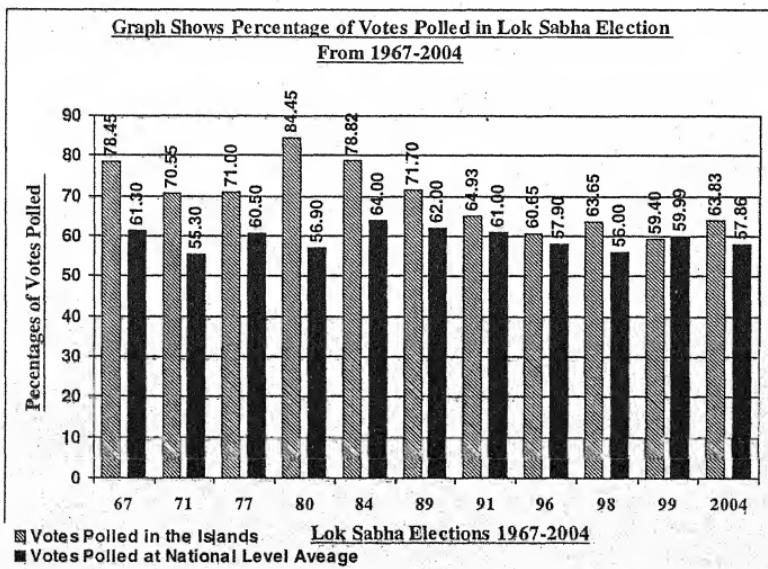
In 1991 Lok Sabha election, there were 169038 voters, out of which 108822 exercised their franchise which was 64% of the total voters.

In 1996, there were total 2,11,226 voters in Andaman & Nicobar Islands, among which 1,30,918 voters exercised their franchise which was 62% of the total voters.

In mid-term election of 1998, the total voters were 2,32,013. In this election, 1,47,698 voters exercised their voting power. The notable point in this election was that the percentage of votes polled increased by 1% as compared to previous election. The reason of this increase, perhaps, was that the BJP was gaining popularity at the national level and many voters who did not exercised their franchise in the previous election came forward to support the newly emerged party. It is evident that for the first time BJP candidate bagged 31,097 votes, a remarkable number of votes, which alarmed the Congress candidates M.R. Bhakta who had remained a charismatic leader of A&N Islands since 1977.<sup>3</sup>

In the mid-term election of 1999, the number of total voters was 2,47,384 and the number of votes polled were 1,47,102. It means only 59% voters cast their votes. It was the lowest percentage of participation by voters since 1967 election.

In 2004 Lok Sabha election, the percentage of votes cast was raised by around 4% from the previous mid-term election in 1999.



**Reasons for decline in votes polled are:-**

The general elections of Lok Sabha including Andaman & Nicobar constituency since 1967 has revealed the trends of votes polled (in percentage). The chart shows the turn out of votes (in percentage) in the elections from 1967 to 2004, the turn out of Islands' vote is higher than all India level. Specially the turn out of votes polled for Island's constituency from 1967 to 1989 was more than 70% on an average, whereas, all India level turn out of votes polled was in between 55% and 62%. Since 1989 elections, the turn out of votes polled in percentage has fallen down remarkably both at national as well as Islands level.

The reasons behind decline in votes polled are:<sup>4</sup> -

1. Frequent changes of governments at the centre and declaration of mid-term elections.
2. No issue could pursue the educated voters about the usefulness of their exercise of voting rights.
3. Political parties have failed to convince the voters towards polling booths.

Though the outcome of last 10 times Lok Sabha elections results say that Islands voters are more conscious and enthusiastic in exercising their franchise. They are more positive towards their democratic rights.

From the analysis of the results of elections from 1967 to 1998 one more thing attract our attention that during the Congress domination the turn out of voters decreased in percentage in every subsequent election upto 1996. The reason for this decrease in voters was losing their faith in Congress (I). The verdict of 1998 election brings a new message that they wanted some change in the leadership in these Islands and their intention was materialized in the next mid-term election in 1999.<sup>5</sup>

Though religions and caste have no traces on the process of election campaign in these Islands, language has succeeded to have its traces on election of different political parties. As Bengali-speaking population remained the largest linguistic group in ANI upto the 1991, they have always favoured the Bengali candidate for Lok Sabha election. Shri. Bhakta was given nomination by the Congress Party in 1977 election realizing the importance of the vote bank of Bengali population. He being from a settler family of East Bengal refugee got the wholehearted support of the Bengali people of the Islands. Hence the Bhakta emerged as political heavy weight in 1977 by winning the only Lok Sabha seat, and has been able to retain the seat in all the subsequent elections upto 1998. However in the 1999 mid-term election, Mr. Bhakta was replaced by Shri. B.P. Roy, a BJP Candidate though not from Bengali refugee family, but has been able to make a place in the hearts of Bengali people. It is again the role of Bengali voters that the CPI(M) candidate Mrs. Neleema Das in (1984) and Mr. T.K. Bepari(1989, 1991) secured a good number of votes in these elections. The Bengali people

being the largest linguistic group have an effective hand in making the fate of candidates and nobody can deny the fact.

Moreover, it has been observed that the Nicobarese tribal voters (who constitute a good number of votes) have had a loyalty towards Congress party since the Lok Sabha elections began in the ANI. The people and leaders of Nicobarese have been in touch with Congress leaders from Nehru to Rajiv Gandhi. It is stated the Nicobar is a secured vote bank for Congress Party. None of the other political parties has influence over Nicobarese voters. Even the leaders and captains of Nicobarese would never allow the non-Congress candidate even to launch election campaign.

#### **WOMEN'S ROLE IN ISLANDS' PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION :**

However, the position of the female workers in Islands politics has not been encouraging. It is so because none of the party has given adequate representation and due importance to women party workers in the election system. In the parliamentary elections, male members contested the lone Lok Sabha seat. Only on one occasion, in 1984, CPI(M), filled the nomination of a lady member for Lok Sabha seats, who was not a resident of these Islands. After that in 1999, from NCP another lady member (as she is the NCP Chief of this Islands unit) contested in the above Lok Sabha.<sup>6</sup>

#### **CONCLUSION :**

The people of these Islands got the right of exercising franchise in the year 1967, i.e. after three consecutive general elections for Lok Sabha had passed. It was the deprivation of people from their democratic participation. The Islands being far-flung from the mainland India other national political party influence also could not touch the feeling of the voters. Therefore one party domination had been seen for over three decades. The absence of strong opposition party in face of Islands politics is unfair and unhealthy for the growth of a true democracy. The analysis of last ten consecutive Lok Sabha election results as regards the percentage of voters turning out at the polling station is again disappointing. This gradual decrease in participation of voters conveys a bad message for the democratic process of the Islands. The frequent mid-term elections and the false promises of the candidates have been the main reasons for this passive attitude of the voters. On the political front also the privileges enjoyed by few people at the cost of others have been another cause of this passive attitude. The voters have lost their faith in the candidates of different political parties. The large numbers of unemployed youths have been fed-up with the problem of their lives and have lost interest in politics and political process.<sup>7</sup>

It is the sacred duty of every voter that he /she does play valuable role in favour of an eligible candidate. Likewise the political parties should also understand the psychology of voters. They should work for the legitimate interest and aspiration of the voters.

National political atmosphere has always impressed the Islands' politics and has also resulted in changing the behaviour of voters. Community has always played an important and positive role in the political world. No political parties could ignore the community interests and influences. Island's politics was not an exception to this. Bengali community has dominated the Island's parliamentary election.

The regional parties have not had good impact or parliamentary elections and politics. The alliance politics has not been able to leave any significant impact on the Islands' politics. Many leaders emerged in politics and changed their parties and political ideologies, used community sentiments for their own narrow sectarian political interests. The voters are sharply divided on the basis of community. Regional feelings which have become a challenge for the unity of the ward's political integrity.

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## TRIBAL POLITICS OF TRIPURA : A STUDY IN ELECTORAL BEHAVIOUR

Alak Bhattacharya

*Political perception is one of the indicating factors in order to identify any caste or tribes or nation. It is an essential precondition of socio-political development of a community. The main objective of the study is to show the motives of political participation of tribal people of Tripura in electoral politics since 1972 – 2003 .This period has taken for study because since 1972 Tripura was granted the status of a full-fledged state and the analysis has been made in respect of general elections of Lok Sabha and Assembly elections of Tribal Areas of Tripura. The paper deals with the mass movement of the tribal people of Tripura, which made them politically conscious and relevantly it will also be discussed why the Left Front is so popular in the hill areas of Tripura*

The Behaviouralists have popularized the concept of political participation in Political Science. Arguments in favour of greater political participation had been advanced by republican and democratic theorists from Rousseau onwards and are still used by contemporary political theorists. Of course, the most obvious way of participation is casting one's vote. Voting is a symbol of participation in decisions of all groups, political and otherwise. In this connection the pattern of electoral behaviour of people of Tribal areas in Tripura can be assessed through its political history.

The struggle of the tribal people of Tripura against some tyrannical attitude of the rulers has a long history. The Kuki Raid of 1860 was not purely made by the Kukis only. Choudhury (1983) observed: 'It was a wider movement in which certain sections of the dissatisfied subjects of the king took part. It was a rebellion against the feudal authority and misrule of the Tripura king'<sup>1</sup>. Jamatia revolt (1863) based on not-to-pay-tax was one of the important democratic movements against the autocratic administration of the feudal lords. The revolt shook the very basis of the unconditional support to the feudal lords. The Reang revolt (1942 - 43) led by Ratanmani Noatia created a great shake in the history of the democratic movement. Tarit Mohan Dasgupta observed : "Reang revolt was not less in any case than the 'Bardoli' Satyagraha movement or the Champaran Satyagraha movement."<sup>2</sup>

The Swadeshi movement in Bengal (1905) had influenced the people of Tripura. During the period of anti-partition movement two training centers of Anushilan Samity were launched at Udaipur and Belonia to give the primary shelters to the revolutionaries who were forced to leave the British India. Sachindra Lal Singh, Umesh Lal Singh, Prashant Debbarma (the elder brother of Kumar Sachin Debbarma), and Kunjeswar Debbarma and Narayan Banerjee took the membership of Anushilan samity.<sup>3</sup>

The Social Reform Movement(1946 - 49) of the Lushai's had been started against irrational power of the Lushai chiefs under the banner of 'Tripura Lushai Union', and it succeeded when the chief commissioner R.K Roy declared that privileges and powers exercised by the chiefs

should be abolished.<sup>4</sup>

The Janashiksha movement (1945-1948) under the banner of 'TRIPURA JANASHIKSHA SAMITY' led by Biren Datta, Nilmani Debbarma, Aghore Debbarma, Dasarath Deb and Sudhanwa Debbarma was a milestone in the history of Tripura. At that time, education was confined to the upper class people. There was a 'Kumar boarding' at Ranirbazar of Comilla and 'Thakur boarding' at Agartala for the education of royal families and thakur families respectively. Samity approached Bir Bikram and sought his help in opening primary school in the hills. The good response, which the Janasiksha Samity received from the king, was evident from 400 schools, which came up at different places of Tripura within a year.<sup>5</sup> Besides removing illiteracy, the Janasiksha samity started a movement against squeezing of the Tribals by the Mahajans. Bose (1996) observed: 'The Samitis activities created a stir among the tribal by bringing in their hearts the nationalist urge, self-respect and political consciousness for the development of independent culture in the life style of the tribal community'.<sup>6</sup> However, Janasiksha Samity ceased to exist in 1948 when Communist Party was banned.

At this point, Tripura Rajya Praja Mandal<sup>7</sup> formed in 1946 led by Jogesh Chandra Debbarma, Birchandra Debbarma etc. Soon Prajamandal came to be reckoned as an alarming political force of Tripura. In a brochure 'Prajar Dabi' (Demands of people), it was called for introduction of popular government in Tripura.<sup>8</sup> It is noted that a 3 members delegation comprising of Birchandra Debbarma ,Biren Dutta and Sudhwana Debbarma, on behalf of Prajamandal, participated as a fraternal delegate to All India States People's conference held at Guwahati in 1946 under the presidency of Jawaharlal Nehru. .

The partition brought with it much complication for Tripura. It lost a very fertile and plain land of several hundred square miles of hitherto zamindari territory ( Chakla Roshnabad), which was one of the saddest tales of political un wisdom ever shown in the history of Tripura.<sup>9</sup> In November 1947, regent Maharani declared that the present status of Chakla Roshnabad would remain, in the same as it had been since 15th August 1947. Another glaring calamity loomed large ahead in the form of a menacing refugee problem. A conspiracy was also hatched at that time to merge Tripura with Pakistan. Under the circumstances, communist leaders thought to form Mukti Parishad.

On the other hand, the second congress of the Communist Party of India held in Kolkata in March 1948, took the 'Path of armed struggle for national liberation'<sup>10</sup>. As a result the communist leaders Deba Prasad Sengupta ,Kanu Sengupta and others were arrested . In this tension-surcharged atmosphere, the 'Tripura Rajya Mukti Parishad' came into existence in August 1948 at Kumaribill of North Sadar Subdivision. Dasarath Deb and Aghor Debbarma were elected as the president and the general secretary respectively.<sup>11</sup> Its movement was spearheaded to resist subjugation by violent means .The Golaghati incident<sup>12</sup> gave birth to an entirely new situation. The Mukti Parishad raised its guerilla unit, known as Santi Sena Bahini .A tribal women's force as an auxiliary force of the guerilla unit was also formed.<sup>13</sup> After the

Golaghati incident, the Padmabil massacre<sup>14</sup> took place in the first part of 1949. Naturally Mukti Parishad started agitation against the Dewani Rule.

Conversely, due to the order of military rule (9 March 1949) in the entire Khowai Division, Mukti Parishad decided to make its own administration from the Patnipara conference (April 1949) in the Sadar Division. Different committees like political, military, arbitration etc. were set up as in government departments.<sup>15</sup> Besides political activities, Mukti Parishad started socio-cultural reforms like ban on child marriage, regulations on jamai khata<sup>16</sup>, regulations on brides price, restrictions on polygamy, ban on uneven marriage, confirming women's right to property, ban on witch hunting etc. 'Go with gun and song together' – was the slogan raised by the Mukti Parishad during the days of movement. After the killing of three girls at Padmabil, the Mukti Parishad raised few Kok-Barak cultural troupes in 1949. In the same year, Mahendra Debbarma composed Kok-Borak song on 'Golaghati killings entitled 'Golaghati Kothma' with a view to inspire the people to join mass movement in greater number. Thus, cultural movement was linked up with the people's movement.<sup>17</sup>

After the independence of India, with the influxes of refugees, some ethno-centric tribal organizations came into being in 1947 with a view of protecting the tribal interest in the territory; and in the long run the tribal movement in Tripura achieved its success with the introduction of Autonomous District Council (April 1, 1985, under sixth schedule).

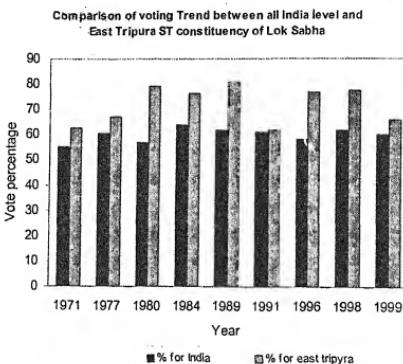
These mass movements reflected in the existence of large scale voting trend of the tribal areas which is numerically more than national level. The table given below shows the fact.

Comparison between east Tripura ST constituencies and all India level in successive elections of Lok Sabha :

| Column-A | Column-B        | Column-C               |
|----------|-----------------|------------------------|
| Year     | Vote % in India | Vote % in east Tripura |
| 1971     | 55.30           | 62.65                  |
| 1977     | 60.50           | 66.99                  |
| 1980     | 56.90           | 79.30                  |
| 1984     | 64.00           | 76.37                  |
| 1989     | 62.00           | 80.75                  |
| 1991     | 61.00           | 61.91                  |
| 1996     | 57.90           | 76.60                  |
| 1998     | 61.90           | 77.51                  |
| 1999     | 59.99           | 66.03                  |

Source – Column A&B:Lok Sabha Election 2004., Jnan Bichitra Reference Manual Series, Agartala, 2004, p.49. Column C: Jnan Bichitra Reference Manual Series, Agartala, 2004, pp 86-94. (Percentage calculated through No. of electors and polled voters.)

The following bar diagram can be drawn from this table.



From the above diagram it is clear that the voting percentage in east Tripura is much better than the all India level. Let us prove it by  $\chi^2$  testing (Taking the help of MINITAB soft wire) since 1971 to 1996 Lok Sabha election.

Let us consider the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) @ The voting percentage in east Tripura is higher than the all India level. The observed frequencies and the corresponding expected frequencies are as below:

|                        | Year |       |       |       |       |       |       |       | Total |
|------------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|                        |      | 1971  | 1977  | 1980  | 1984  | 1989  | 1991  | 1996  |       |
| <b>All India level</b> |      |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| Observed frequency     |      | 55    | 60    | 57    | 64    | 62    | 61    | 58    | 417   |
| Expected frequency     |      | 53.37 | 57.44 | 61.51 | 63.32 | 64.68 | 55.63 | 61.06 |       |
| <b>East Tripura</b>    |      |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| Observed frequency     |      | 63    | 67    | 79    | 76    | 81    | 62    | 77    | 505   |
| Expected frequency     |      | 64.63 | 69.56 | 74.49 | 76.68 | 78.32 | 67.37 | 73.94 |       |
| Total                  |      | 118   | 12    | 136   | 140   | 14    | 123   | 135   | 922   |

Let  $O_i$  be the observed frequency and  $E_i$  the corresponding expected frequency.

$$\chi^2 = \sum (O_i - E_i)^2 / E_i = 0.050 + 0.114 + 0.331 + 0.007 + 0.111 + 0.518 + 0.153 +$$

$$0.041 + 0.094 + 0.273 + 0.006 + 0.091 + 0.428 + 0.126 = 2.344$$

$DF = (c-1)(r-1) = (7-1)(2-1) = 6$ , The table value of  $\chi^2$  at 6 df and .05 significant level is 12.59 which is much higher than the calculated value and hence the null hypothesis is accepted i.e.

the voting percentage in east Tripura is much more than the all India level.

### Dominancy of the Left Front

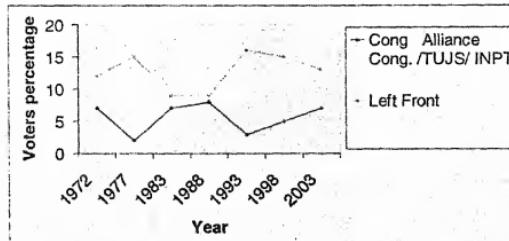
This trend of voting behaviour reflects in the succession of Left Front in the general election of Lok Sabha ST constituency and assembly elections since 1972 - 2003 . In the first general election of Lok Sabha and of the Tripura Electoral College in 1952, the Communist Party could capture most of the seats from the constituencies having predominantly tribal voters. In 1957,CPI (M) had lost the majority. The swing of the pendulum again moved toward the Communist Party except in 1988 election. Even during the Congress period also Communist Party was predominant in tribal areas. It can be understood from the table below :

#### Reserved for ST Constituencies in Assembly Election since 1972-2003.

| Column-A<br>Year | Column-B<br>Total Seat | Column-C<br>Left Front | Column-D<br>Cong-Alliance<br>(Cong./TUJS/INPT) | Column-E<br>Independent |
|------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1972             | 19                     | 12                     | 07                                             |                         |
| 1977             | 17                     | 15                     | 02                                             |                         |
| 1983             | 17                     | 09                     | 07                                             | 01                      |
| 1988             | 17                     | 09                     | 08                                             |                         |
| 1993             | 20                     | 16                     | 03                                             | 01                      |
| 1998             | 20                     | 15                     | 05                                             |                         |
| 2003             | 20                     | 13                     | 07                                             |                         |

Source:ColumnA&B : Electors at a glance in the state of Tripura in different elections since 1952-2003,Election Dept.,Govt. of Tripura,p.1. Column C&d:Bidhan Sabha Nirbachan-2003, (in Beng.) ,(Assembly Election-2003),Tripura Darpan,a daily local paper,pp.42-62.

Following line diagram can be drawn from this table, which shows the dominant position of Left Parties in tribal areas.



Also in Lok Sabha election CPI (M) has been leading in the east Tripura ST constituencies. The table given below shows the fact :

| Year of Election | Name of the elected party |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| 1971             | CPIM                      |
| 1977             | CONG                      |
| 1980             | CPIM                      |
| 1984             | CPIM                      |
| 1989             | CONG                      |
| 1991             | CONG                      |
| 1996             | CPIM                      |
| 1998             | CPIM                      |
| 1999             | CPIM                      |

Source : Bidhan Sabha Nirbachan-2003, (in Beng.) ,(Assembly Election-2003),Tripura Darpan,a daily local paper, pp.63-64.

#### Squabbling of the Congress Alliance

In the 1957, 1962, 1967, and 1972 assembly elections Congress gained a majority. In 1977 the left front gained overwhelming majority. Out of 60, left front got 56 seats and TUJS gained in four constituencies. Certain political incidents like the defeat of the Congress at the centre, the formation of Janata Government there, the fall of the Sengupta Ministry in Tripura., the split between Janata party and Tripura CFD happened rapidly and that helped the left front to come into power. The ill feeling between Sachindra Lal Singha and Sukhamay Sengupta weakened the congress.<sup>18</sup> Organizationally, the Congress here suffered from apoplexy at the center and anemia at the circumference.<sup>19</sup> Since 1983 state politics generally polarized between two blocks – the Congress-TUJS block in one hand and CPI (M) led left front on the other. Congress - TUJS alliance came into power in 1988. But Congress suffered a set back by her in-party squabbling.<sup>20</sup> As a result Sudhir Ranjan Majumder resigned from the post of Chief Minister and Samir Ranjan Barman became the Chief Minister. Congress was split again. Sudhir Ranjan joined in Trinamul Congress in 1999 Lok Sabha election. After a few days most of the leaders of Trinamul including Sudhir Ranjan returned to the Congress. Similarly, Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti (TUJS) split again and again. The break-away groups formed Indigenous Peoples Front of Tripura (IPFT) and Tripura Tribal National council (TTNC). In 2001 all groups of the former TUJS gave birth to a common platform, the Indigenous National Party of Tripura

(INPT), which again in 2003 had split with the break way group forming a new outfit National Socialist Party of Tripura (NSPT). In 2001 a third political block emerged with the conglomeration of BJP(Bharatiya Janata Party), Trinamul Congress and IPFT. In the last Assembly Election (2003), IPFT joined with Congress alliance. On the eve of 2004 Lok Sabha election TUJS, TNV(Tripura National Volunteers), IPFT i.e. INPT again seceded the alliance with Congress and joined NDA.

### Descending Trend of Tribal Voters

The voting percentage of Tripura is numerically higher than all India level. But at the same time, percentage of tribal voters has been decreased. Presently there are 60 assembly constituencies out of which 20 are reserved for ST. These are: 1-Simna, 11-Mandaibazar, 12-Takarjala, 17-Golaghati, 18-Charilam, 23-Ramchandraghat, 25-Asharambari, 26-Promodnagar, 28-Krishnapur, 30-Bagma, 37-Shantirbazar, 39-Julaibari, 40-Manu, 42-Ampinagar, 44-Raimavalley, 47-Salema, 48-Kulai, 49-Chamanu, 58-Pacharthal and 60-Kanchanpur. Out of those, 6 constituencies, 1-Simna, 11-Mandaibazar, 12-Takarjala, 42-Ampinagar, 49-Chamanu and 60-Kanchanpur, remain unchanged as ST reserved since 1972-2003.

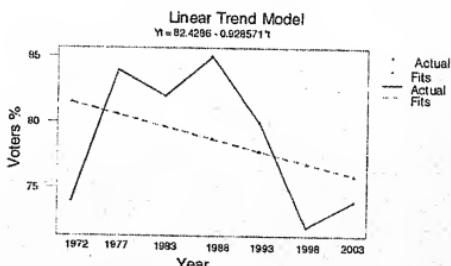
### Voters trend in Six ST reserved assembly constituencies since 1972-2003 and east Tripura ST Lok Sabha constituency since 1977 – 1999.

Source: Col. A & B : Bidhan Sabha Nirbachan-2003, published by Tripura Darpan, a local daily newspaper , Agartala, pp.42-64 & collected data from Election Dept. Govt. Of Tripura. Voter percentage calculated through no. of electors and polled vote.

Col. C : Taking the help of M.S.Excel Soft wire the forecast has been done by Least square approximation method of Time series analysis.

#### 1-Simna

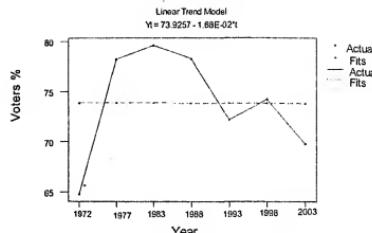
| Col.A<br>Year | Col.B<br>Voters % | Col.C<br>Forecast |
|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1972          | 74                | 81.44             |
| 1977          | 84                | 80.57             |
| 1983          | 82                | 79.53             |
| 1988          | 85                | 78.66             |
| 1993          | 80                | 77.79             |
| 1998          | 72                | 76.92             |
| 2003          | 74                | 76.05             |



## 11- Mandai

| Col. A<br>Year | Col.B<br>Voters % | Col.C<br>Forecast |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1972           | 64.77             | 73.81             |
| 1977           | 78.23             | 73.82             |
| 1983           | 79.59             | 73.84             |
| 1988           | 78.25             | 73.86             |
| 1993           | 72.2              | 73.88             |
| 1998           | 74.22             | 73.89             |
| 2003           | 69.75             | 73.91             |

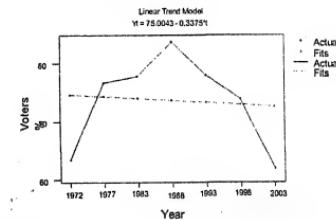
Trend Analysis for Voters %



## 12 - Takariala

| Year | Voters percentage | Forecast |
|------|-------------------|----------|
| 1972 | 63.41             | 74.49    |
| 1977 | 76.67             | 74.22    |
| 1983 | 77.77             | 73.91    |
| 1988 | 83.78             | 73.64    |
| 1993 | 78.02             | 73.37    |
| 1998 | 73.92             | 73.11    |
| 2003 | 62.01             | 72.84    |

Trend Analysis for Voters %



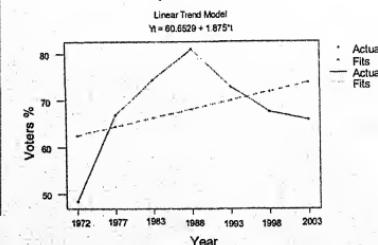
## 14- Ampinagar

| Col-a | Year | Col-b<br>Voters % | Col-c<br>Forecast |
|-------|------|-------------------|-------------------|
|       | 1972 | 58.31             | 66.52             |
|       | 1977 | 71.85             | 68.85             |
|       | 1983 | 73.98             | 71.64             |
|       | 1988 | 82.36             | 73.96             |
|       | 1993 | 78.13             | 76.29             |

## 49 - Chamanu

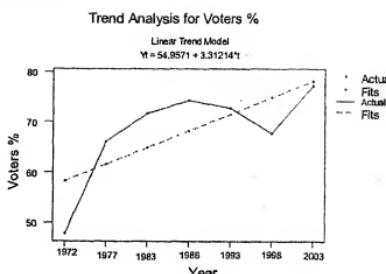
| Col-a | Year | Col-voters % | Col-c Forecast |
|-------|------|--------------|----------------|
|       | 1972 | 48.41        | 62.22          |
|       | 1977 | 66.87        | 64.11          |
|       | 1983 | 74.41        | 66.37          |
|       | 1988 | 80.97        | 68.26          |
|       | 1993 | 72.88        | 70.15          |
|       | 1998 | 67.59        | 72.03          |
|       | 2003 | 65.94        | 73.92          |

Trend Analysis for Voters %



## 60 – Kanchanpur

| Year | Voters percentage | Forecast |
|------|-------------------|----------|
| 1972 | 47.71             | 58.04    |
| 1977 | 66.13             | 61.27    |
| 1983 | 71.67             | 65.15    |
| 1988 | 74.27             | 68.39    |
| 1993 | 72.72             | 71.63    |
| 1998 | 67.74             | 74.86    |
| 2003 | 77.2              | 78.10    |



The above diagrams has been drawn by the help of MINITAB softwire (Time series analysis).The dotted line(Fits) in the above diagrams represent the Voting trend (expected) since 1972 – 2003 . The smooth line (Actual) represent the observed frequency data .From these diagrams it is drawn that the Voting trend is decreasing .

In case of 1-Simna, the expected voting trend is decreasing. Moreover, the observed frequencies are much less since 1993 .

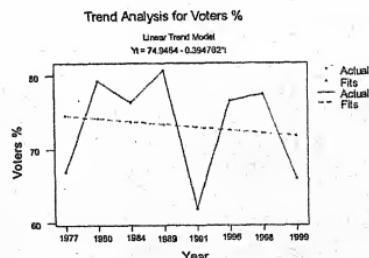
In case of 11-Mandai, the trend is slightly decreasing . In 1993, observed frequency decreased than expected trend .Though in 1998 it is slightly increased , but in 2003 it again decreased than the expected trend

In case of 12 – Takarjala, the expected trend is decreasing . From 1977 – 1988, the observed frequencies are much higher than the expected trend and in 1988, it reached the peak .But since 1988, the observed frequencies are coming down gradually.

In case of 42-Ampinagar, 49-Chamanu , 60 – Kanchanpur the expected trends are strictly increasing. But since 1998, observed frequency are being less than expected trend.

The same is observed in Lok Sabha election of east Tripura ST constituency. The following chart Shows the fact :

| Col-a-Year | Col-b voters % | Col-c Forecast |
|------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1977       | 66.9           | 73.85          |
| 1980       | 79.3           | 73.68          |
| 1984       | 76.36          | 73.46          |
| 1989       | 80.75          | 73.18          |
| 1991       | 61.91          | 73.07          |
| 1996       | 76.6           | 72.80          |
| 1998       | 77.51          | 72.69          |
| 1999       | 66.03          | 72.63          |



From this trend, supposition can be pinched that 1) Insurgency problem could affect the voters; 2) Electors may be frustrated in the contemporary politics. It is important to note here that in 1980, Tripura witnessed an ethnic riot causing a divesting political dynamic in the state. A section of TUJS went to underground and in 1989 TNV returned to the mainstream of life. But the tribal rebellion did not end. The TNV upsurge was followed by the emergence of a dozen of framed outfits such as NLFT(National Liberation Front of Tripura), ATTFT(All Tripura Tiger Force), TRA(Tripura Rageraction Army), and BNLF(Bru National Liberation Front) etc. It is noted that in 1947, 'Seng-Krak' was formed by a group of militant tribal. Its leaders were known for its Bangal Kheda (Remove the Bengalee People) movement. However, the organization was declared outlawed for its violent activities. After the Seng-krak was banned, the 'Paharia Union' came into being in July 1951. Other organizations 'Adhibashi Samiti' and 'Adhibashi Sangha' were formed in 1952. and 1953 respectively. In 1954, 'Adhibashi Samsad' came into existence as a result of the fusion of the previous associations. It undertook some movement programmed for inclusion of the tribal in the administration. In 1955, 'Tribal Union' formed at Agartala. It was renamed ' Eastern India Tribal Union'. It raised slogan for a Tribal State. The Seng-Krak appeared for the second time in 1967 at Dasda Kanchanpur, North Tripura. Organizations like Seng-Krak, TNV, ATTFT, NLFT, achieved nothing of their desired objectives except fomenting communal passions.

**Conclusion :** We can reach to the conclusion from the above analysis that there were so many movements and countless sacrifices behind the development of consciousness of Tribal people of Tripura. Political participation is an important indicator of democratic functioning of a social system. But one observable fact in the Indian election studies is the almost criminal neglect of the problem of non-voting. If electoral behaviour was to be taken as an indicator of the success of parliamentary democracy, then the existence of large scale non-voting would mean that the Indian Parliamentary Democracy is really non-working. About 40% of the people are non-voting.<sup>21</sup> It is in this sphere of political participation, the tribes of Tripura have played a fabulous role and Communist Party was a gainer by organizing the people through the Janamongol Samity, Janashiksha Samity and Tripura Rajya Ganamuktiparishad. But at the same time, downward percentage of polled vote since 1988 to 2003 is very alarming for the critical political situation in the Tribal areas of Tripura.

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12. Golaghati killings took place on 9th October 1948 . Six Tribal peasants and one Bengali Muslim were killed in an malicious police firing.
13. Dasarath Deb, op.cit,p.18
14. Three Tribal girls – Kumari, Madhuti and Rupasree (Debbarma) were killed in police firing when the women's force came out at Khamapara of Padmabil to resist Titun . The army used to urge the Tribal women folk and children to carry their luggage under the medieval 'Titung system'
15. P. K. Bose, op.cit. p.48
16. Jamai khata means compulsory apprenticeship of the bridegroom as a farm hand at the house of the would be father-in-law. The custom was prevalent in the Tripuri community.
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## STATUS OF WOMEN IN POLITICS

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*M.Sugirtha*

Women around the world at every socio-political level find themselves under-represented in parliament and far removed from decision-making levels. While the political playing-field in each country has its own particular characteristics, one feature remains common to all: it is uneven and not conducive to women's participation. Throughout the world women face obstacles to their participation in politics. These barriers are to be found in prevailing social and economic regimes, as well as in existing political structures. In the Indian context, and particularly for women, the public career of a person depends a great deal on her family background. Most women themselves are also unwilling to engage in the type of activities which seem necessary for election to public office. Their proportion in the Parliament as well as State Legislatures and other top political hierarchies is not very significant. Their participation in politics as voters, candidates, campaigners and office-holders in political parties, on an equal footing with men, still remains a dream. They have yet to realize the value of their political role. In this context, this paper makes an attempt to study status of women in politics at international level, regional level and national level.

Status of women in politics can be defined as the degree of equality and freedom enjoyed by women in the shaping and sharing of power and in the value given by society to this role of women<sup>1</sup>.

The UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said on the eve of International Women's Day that "the role of women in decision-making was central to the advancement of women around the world and to the progress of humankind as a whole. There was still far to go in ensuring that half of the world's population took up its rightful place in the world's decision-making"<sup>2</sup>.

Women around the world at every socio-political level find themselves under-represented in national parliaments and far removed from decision-making levels. While the political playing-field in each country has its own particular characteristics, one feature remains common to all: it is uneven and not conducive to women's participation. Women who want to enter politics find that the political, public, cultural and social environment are often unfriendly or even hostile to them<sup>3</sup>.

The sweep of women's political subordination encompasses the great variety of cultures, economic arrangements, and regimes in which they live. In most cultures there is a complex matrix of political power composed of many social hierarchies, of which gender is only one component. Nonetheless, men of any group are more able to be active in politics than the women of their group<sup>4</sup>.

The Worldwide Government Directory contains information on all United Nations Member States and other Observer States, with information provided for a total of 187 countries<sup>5</sup>, regarding representation of women at Cabinet level and sub-ministerial level. The details are

the following:

#### **Representation of women at Cabinet level**

The number of female ministers worldwide doubled in the last decade from 3.4 per cent in 1996 to 6.8 per cent in 2004. In 48 countries, there were no women ministers at all. Women ministers remain concentrated in social issues (14%) compared to legal (9.4%), economic (4.1%), political affairs (3.4%) and the executive (3.9%). A "critical mass" of 30 per cent women at the ministerial level has been achieved in five countries - Barbados, Finland, Liechtenstein, Seychelles and Sweden. Ten additional countries have 20-29 per cent women at the ministerial level, including seven from the Europe/Others region - Andorra, Austria, Denmark, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands and Norway – and three from the Caribbean, Grenada, Haiti and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. In the Asia and Pacific region and Eastern Europe, very little progress has been achieved, with the proportion of women ministers being less than 5 per cent.

#### **Representation of women at Sub-ministerial level**

In 136 countries, women held no ministerial positions concerned with the economy. In the Asia and Pacific region, women ministers held positions in only 2% of all economic ministries. Globally, only 9.9 per cent of all sub-ministerial positions (Deputy Minister, Permanent Secretary and Deputy Permanent Secretary) were held by women. In sectoral terms, women were slightly better represented in social ministries in the Europe/Others and the Asia and Pacific regions, while they were better represented in legal ministries in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean. A "critical mass" of 30 per cent women at the sub-ministerial level has been achieved in six countries - Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Costa Rica, San Marino and the United States. In eight countries, the proportion of women at the subministerial has reached 25 per cent or more - Australia, Dominica, El Salvador, Macedonia, New Zealand, Philippines, Sweden, and St. Kitts and Nevis. In seven additional states, the proportion of women at the subministerial level has reached 20 per cent or more - Barbados, Colombia, Croatia, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana and Norway .

However, statistics show that women are gradually making their way into the political arena. Women accounted for 10 percent of the members of legislative bodies in 1995. Today they make up 15.6 percent of parliamentarians worldwide, according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The number of countries with a critical mass of women parliamentarians – defined as being at least 30 percent – has increased from five in 1997 to 16 in 2004<sup>6</sup>.

In 1995, women had accounted for 11.3 per cent of legislators in the world parliaments. In 2005, they represented 16.3 per cent of legislators, a small 5 per cent increase over 10

years. In 1995, Sweden had topped the ranking of women in parliament with 40.4 per cent. Ten years later, political developments in other parts of the world, most notably Africa and Latin America, brought Rwanda to the top of the world classification, with 48.8 per cent women in elected office. While the situation was moderately encouraging, more than moderate progress was needed. If current incremental rates continued, an average of 30 per cent of women in parliament would not be reached until 2025. True parity would have to wait until 2040<sup>7</sup>.

There are many reasons why women are under-represented in politics despite repeated international and national commitments to equality. Even a quick glance at the current composition of political decision-makers in any region provides evidence that women still face numerous obstacles in articulating and shaping their own destiny<sup>8</sup>.

#### **Political Obstacles**

Among the political obstacles that women face, the following feature prominently :

- The prevalence of the "masculine model" of political life and of elected governmental bodies. Men dominate the political arena; men formulate the rules of the political game; and men define the standards for evaluation. Furthermore, political life is organized according to male norms and values, and in some cases, even male lifestyles. For example, the political model is based on the idea of "winners and losers", competition and confrontation, rather than on mutual respect, collaboration and consensus building. This environment is alien to women, both to their nature and to their experiences. The existence of this male-dominated model results in either women rejecting politics altogether or rejecting male-style politics. Thus, when women do participate in politics, they tend to do so in small numbers<sup>9</sup>.
- The lack of party support, such as limited financial support for women candidates; limited access to political networks; and the prevalence of double standards. Women play important roles in campaigning and mobilizing support for their parties, yet they rarely occupy decision-making positions in these structures. In fact, less than 11 per cent of party leaders world-wide are women. Although political parties possess resources for conducting election campaigns, women do not benefit from these resources. The selection and nomination process within political parties is also biased against women. An "old boys club" atmosphere and prejudices inhibit and prohibit politically inclined women from integrating themselves into their party's work. This results in an underestimation of women as politicians by those who provide money for election campaigns, thus further hindering women from being nominated<sup>10</sup>.

- The lack of contact and co-operation with other public organizations such as trade (labour) unions and women's groups. During the last decade women's parliamentary representation in long-standing democracies has increased. One of the critical reasons for this rise is the impact of women's organizations both inside and outside political parties. They worked with political and government institutions to secure electoral changes to facilitate women's nomination and election. This strategy resulted in increasing women's representation within legislative bodies. However, in recently developed or partially developed democracies there is limited contact and co-operation between women politicians and women's organizations or other broad interest organizations such as trade and labour unions. Moreover, women's movements and women's groups in these parts of the world either tend to keep their distance from women MPs, or do not invest in organized channels of communication and lobbying on issues related to promoting women to decision-making levels. This is the case either as a result of the lack of awareness of the potential benefits of this networking function, or the lack of resources to invest in such contacts<sup>11</sup>
- The absence of well-developed education and training systems for women's leadership in general, and for orienting young women toward political life in particular is one of the obstacles faced by women.

#### Socio-economic Obstacles

The socio-economic obstacles impacting on women's participation in politics could be classified as follows:

- ❖ Poverty and unemployment;
- ❖ Lack of adequate financial resources;
- ❖ Illiteracy and limited access to education and choice of professions;
- ❖ The dual burden of domestic tasks and professional obligations.

#### Ideological and psychological hindrances

Ideological and psychological hindrances for women in entering politics include the following :

- In many countries, traditions continue to emphasize, and often dictate, women's primary role as mothers and housewives. A traditional, strong, patriarchal value system favours sexually segregated roles. The "traditional cultural values" militate against the advancement, progress and participation of women in any political process. Societies all over the world are dominated by an ideology about "a woman's place". According to

this perception, women should only play the role of "working mother", which is generally low-paid and apolitical. In addition, in some developing societies, men even tell women how to vote. This is the environment that many women face one in which a certain collective image of women in traditional, apolitical roles continues to dominate. The image of a woman leader requires that she be asexual in her speech and manners, someone who can be identified as a woman only through nonsexual characteristics. Often it is supposed to be unacceptable, or even shameful in the mass consciousness, for women to be open about their feminine nature. In fact, the more authoritative and "manly" a woman is, the more she corresponds to the undeclared male rules of the game. That is why women politicians in general, have to overcome this difficulty of feeling uncomfortable in the political field as though they are somewhere where they do not belong, behaving in ways that are not natural to them. "Women don't have the right to cry; it's only the privilege of men. A male MP, even a minister, can cry. It's normal. It's not being emotional, it's being intelligent. But women don't have the right to be weak, to cry, to show our emotions – because we live in a time when to be in politics, we have to behave more like a man.<sup>12</sup>"

- Lack of confidence in themselves is one of the main reasons for women's under representation in formal political institutions, including parliaments, governments and political parties. With confidence and determination women can reach the highest levels in the political process. That is why women should believe in themselves and should do away with the widespread perception that men have to be their leaders. Women are equal to and have the same potential as men, but only they can fight for their rights. Women are very good campaigners, organizers and support-mobilizers, but they rarely contest parliamentary posts. A certain culture of fear prevents women from contesting elections and from participating in political life<sup>13</sup>.
- In some countries, women perceive politics as a "dirty" game. This has barred women's confidence in their ability to confront political processes. In fact, such a perception is prevalent world-wide. Unfortunately, this perception reflects the reality in many countries<sup>14</sup>.
- The mass media deserves to be called the fourth branch of power because of its influence on public opinion and public consciousness. The media in any society has two roles: to serve as a chronicler of current events and as an informer of public opinion, thereby fostering different points of view. Often, the mass media tends to minimize coverage of events and organizations of interest to women. The media, including women's publications, does not adequately inform the public about the rights and roles of women in society; nor does it take issue with government measures for improving women's position. Most of the world's media has yet to deal with the fact that women, as a rule,

are the first victims of economic changes and reforms taking place in a country, i.e., they are the first to lose their jobs. The fact that women are largely alienated from the political decision-making process is also ignored by the media

- Further, obstacles may vary with the political situation in each country. In established democracies for example, an obstacle may be inequality within political parties where there is a legal limitation, such as the five per cent threshold vote, which political parties must obtain. In developing democracies, it may be access to the mass media or access to resources for conducting an election campaign. In military or authoritarian systems, it may be access to the political elite. Regardless of the political situation, in all countries the electoral system must be reformed to give women the effective right to be elected.

Excluding women from positions of power and from elected bodies impoverishes the development of democratic principles in public life and inhibits the economic development of a society. The majority of governing institutions are dominated by men who further their own interests. Male-dominated political institutions of government do not promote women or women's issues. Thus it remains imperative to emphasize that women themselves must organize and mobilize their networks, learn to communicate their interests with different organizations, and push for mechanisms to enhance their own representation.

The following are the some of the strategies to increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making suggested by the United Nations Organisations<sup>15</sup>:

Actions to be taken by Governments, national bodies, the private sector, political parties, trade unions, employers' organizations, subregional and regional bodies, non-governmental and international organizations and educational institutions :

- (a) Provide leadership and self-esteem training to assist women and girls, particularly those with special needs, women with disabilities, and women belonging to racial and ethnic minorities to strengthen their self-esteem and to encourage them to take decision-making positions;
- (b) Have transparent criteria for decision-making positions and ensure that the selecting bodies have a gender-balanced composition;
- (c) Create a system of mentoring for inexperienced women and, in particular, offer training, including training in leadership and decision-making, public speaking and self-assertion, as well as in political campaigning;
- (d) Provide gender-sensitive training for women and men to promote non-discriminatory working relationships and respect for diversity in work and management styles;
- (e) Develop mechanisms and training to encourage women to participate in the electoral

process, political activities and other leadership areas.

### **Women in Politics – South Asia**

#### **Pakistan**

In Pakistan, 13 women have been elected to non-reserved, open seats on the 342-seat National Assembly -- nine from Punjab province, three from Sindh, and one from Balochistan. These 13 representatives come on top of 60 other women elected on especially reserved seats in the national legislature for women, quotas established to increase political representation by women. Similarly, 17 percent of seats in each of the four provincial assemblies have also been reserved for women. As many as 11 women have been elected to the provincial legislatures, with only one in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP)<sup>16</sup>. There is one woman in the Cabinet and none in the Supreme Court. During 2001, the Musharraf Government set aside one-third of the seats in the local council elections for female candidates. In 2002, the National Reconstruction Bureau enacted electoral reforms that include the tripling of National Assembly seats reserved for women. According to the Election Commission, 2,621 women competed for 1,867 reserved seats at the district level in 2001. In some districts, social and religious conservatives prevented women from becoming candidates; however, in several districts, female candidates were elected unopposed. Women participated in large numbers in elections, although some are dissuaded from voting by family, religious, and social customs. In districts of the NWFP and southern Punjab's tribal areas, conservative religious leaders lobbied successfully to prevent women from contesting elections or casting ballots. According to reports, female voters were threatened and their families intimidated from voting and running for office. In October the MMA coalition of religious parties declared that the families of women who voted in NWFP would be fined. Prime Minister Jamali has one female minister and one female special advisor. Provincial governors appointed by President Musharraf also have named women to serve in provincial cabinets<sup>17</sup>.

#### **Bangladesh**

In Bangladesh, women have been more politically stable in the last two decades. Quota has ensured women's presence in the local government and National Parliament. Among women politicians, the older group entered politics through social work, while some among them and the new generation of women have emerged from student politics. Despite many odds, statistics and analyses reveal a slowly growing trend towards women's political participation. However, they face an ominous challenge. There has also been a growing influence of money in Bangladesh politics, particularly in electoral politics and in guarding/promoting spheres of influence. This acts as a further constraint on women's political participation since fewer women have access to financial resources. It is very difficult for women to work effectively

in this system unless such practices are eradicated<sup>18</sup>.

#### Bhutan

In Bhutan, women comprise 48 percent of the population and participate freely in the social and economic life of the country. Forty-three percent of enrollment in school is female, and women account for 6 percent of civil service employment. On the other hand, female school enrolment has been growing in response to government policies. Women are increasingly found among senior officials and private sector entrepreneurs, especially in the tourism industry. Women in unskilled jobs are generally paid slightly less than men.

Sixty-two percent of the female population works in agriculture. The literacy rate among rural women is around 10%. Seventy percent of the land is owned by women. Fourteen seats (9.33%) are occupied by women in the National Assembly (as of October 2001 based on IPU records). Women were allowed to vote in 1953<sup>19</sup>.

#### Nepal

In Nepal, although the Constitution provides protections for women, including equal pay for equal work, the Government has not taken significant action to implement its provisions, even in many of its own industries. Women face systematic discrimination, particularly in rural areas, where religious and cultural tradition, lack of education, and ignorance of the law remain severe impediments to their exercise of basic rights such as the right to vote or to hold property in their own names.

According to the 1991 census, the female literacy rate is 26 percent, compared with 57 percent for men. Human rights groups report that girls attend secondary schools at a rate half that of boys. There are many NGO's focused on integrating women into society and the economy. These NGO's work in the areas of literacy, small business, skills transfer, and prevention of trafficking in women and girls. There also are a growing number of women's advocacy groups.

Most political parties have women's groups. Members of Parliament have begun working for the passage of tougher laws for crimes of sexual assault, but have had little success so far.

12 seats (5.9%) out of 205 held by women in the Lower House. 9 seats (15%) out of 60 in the Upper House. Kamala Pant is the lone female Minister of State. The 20% seat reservation in local political bodies has brought more than 39,000 women in local bodies<sup>20</sup>.

#### Srilanka

In Srilanka, although there are no legal impediments to the participation of women in politics or government, the social mores in some communities limit women's activities outside

home, and the percentage of women in government and politics does not correspond to their percentage of the population.

In November 1994, a woman was elected President for the first time; she was re-elected in December 1999 for a second term. Eleven women held seats in the Parliament that completed its term in August 2000. In addition to the Prime Minister, the Minister for Women's Affairs, and the Minister of Social Services, a number of women held posts as deputy ministers in the last parliament. Of the 5,000 candidates for the October 2000 parliamentary elections, 116 were women and 7 of them won seats in the October elections. Only one woman (Minister of Women's Affairs) was appointed to the new cabinet formed after the December 5 elections.

At present there are only 4.8% women in parliament and according to 1997 statistics, there were a mere 3.4%, 2.6% and 1.7% women representatives respectively in Municipal Councils, Urban Councils and Pradeshiya Sabhas.

The quota system can be used as an effective tool to increase women's participation in politics. In 1997 Sri Lanka's government proposed a constitutional reform, which contained a 25% reservation for women at the local government level. However, little progress has been done and the provision was not even stated in the August 2000 constitutional reforms. The reason given by the government was that the Muslim and Tamil parties felt that they would not be able to find sufficient women candidates<sup>21</sup>.

#### **Maldives**

In Maldives, women traditionally have played a subordinate role in society, although they now participate in public life in growing numbers and gradually are participating at higher levels. Women constitute 38 percent of government employees, and about 10 percent of uniformed NSS personnel. Well-educated women maintain that cultural norms, not the law, inhibit women's education and career choices. In many instances, education for girls is curtailed after the seventh grade, largely because parents do not allow girls to leave their home island for an island having a secondary school. Nonetheless, women enjoy a higher literacy rate (98 percent) than men (96 percent). Due to largely orthodox Islamic training, there is a strong strain of conservative sentiment--especially among small businessmen and residents of the outer islands--that opposes an active role for women outside home. However, the Government continued legal literacy programs to make women aware of their legal rights and workshops on gender and political awareness in the outer atolls. The Government also has built 10 of 15 planned women's centers in the atolls, which are facilities where family health workers can provide medical services. The centers also provide libraries and space for meetings and other activities with a focus on the development of women.

The Cabinet replaced the National Women's Council with a Gender Equality Council to serve as an advisory body to the Government to help strengthen the role of women in society and to help ensure equal participation by women in the country's development. Also during the year, the Government, with the assistance of the European Union and the U.N. Population Fund, expanded a program of small loans to women for development projects to additional islands. Only 3 seats (6.0%) held by women in the Majlis. There is a woman, Rashida Yoosuf, appointed in the Cabinet as Secretary of Women's Affairs and Social Security<sup>22</sup>.

It is known that South Asia has more powerful women politicians than any other set of countries in the world. Women had been prime ministers, leaders of major parties, heads of state and regional governments. Chandrika Kumaratunga in Sri Lanka, Sonia Gandhi in India, Benazir Bhutto in Pakistan, and Khaleda Zia in Bangladesh are examples, as well as powerful women in India such as Mayawati, Jayalalitha, Uma Bharati, Sushma Swaraj and others. Yet, overall women's political participation is dismal. The membership of women in the parliaments of these countries has ranged between 6-8% during the last few decades.

As noted above, the percentage of women in all the national parliaments of South Asian countries has been low since independence and has barely risen in the last decades. In the year 2004, the percentage of women in the national parliaments have been 5.9% for Nepal , 21.3% for Pakistan , 4.9% for Sri Lanka , 9.02% for India , 2.0% for Bangladesh, 9.3% for Bhutan and 6.0% for Maldives.<sup>23</sup>

#### Representation of Women in Politics in South Asia

| Country    | Year – Women Received Voting Rights | Year-First elected or appointed in Parliament | Representation in Lower House as in 2004 |
|------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| India      | 1950                                | 1952                                          | 9.02%                                    |
| Pakistan   | 1947                                | 1973                                          | 21.3%                                    |
| Nepal      | 1951                                | 1952                                          | 5.9%                                     |
| Bhutan     | 1953                                | 1975                                          | 9.3%                                     |
| Sri Lanka  | 1931                                | 1947                                          | 4.9%                                     |
| Bangladesh | 1972                                | 1973                                          | 2.0%                                     |
| Maldives   | 1932                                | 1979                                          | 6.0%                                     |

Source: UNDP Report, 2004.

The obstacles to women's equal participation in governance are great and deeply embedded in South Asian social and cultural patterns. Most of these countries are among the most patriarchal in the world. This is starkly shown by Amartya Sen's criteria of "missing women." Countries such as India and Pakistan are among those which have a low sex ratio, i.e. the ratio of women to men in the population structure. For India in the 2001 census it was in fact 93 women to 100 men, for Pakistan 82. This is a result of maltreatment, less access to medical care, less food, and a general arduous and toiling existence<sup>24</sup>.

Another obstacle to women's political participation is the intensely competitive nature of politics itself. In the countries of South Asia, it is more than a "public service" profession; it is a great lucrative source of income and power. Men are obviously reluctant to give up their control over this profit-making arena. Further, politics is also often characterized by violence, from "booth-capturing" to raucous scenes in the assemblies. A significant number of elected representatives in India, from almost all parties, have criminal records. In this kind of atmosphere, women are at an even greater disadvantage<sup>25</sup>.

Thus, even the more "women-friendly" of the south Asian countries, such as Sri Lanka, still have a low participation rate of women in governance<sup>26</sup>.

#### Women in Politics – India

The Constitution of India has put women on an equal footing with men in all respects. Although women occupy a predominant position in social life and constitute 50 per cent of total population, their political participation in decision making is very much limited in proportion to their size at all levels in a male dominated society<sup>27</sup>.

The emergence of Indian women into active political life since Independence is a result of their partnership in Indian freedom struggle. Gandhiji's leadership followed by that of Jawaharlal Nehru, who championed that cause of women and sincerely felt that women must work side by side with man, were reason enough for the important new role they were to play<sup>28</sup>.

The 19th century reform movement and the spread of education among the women had initiated the process of improving the status of women. However, this process was essentially limited to improving the position of women within the traditional family structure. Prevalent social attitudes, particularly among the upper and middle classes, continued to regard domestic life as women's sole occupation. Nevertheless, there was a minority of women who voluntarily participated in both social welfare and revolutionary movements. They were active in the cause of women's education, welfare of the weaker sections in society and relief to distressed persons during emergencies like floods, droughts, famines, etc. A still smaller group became

involved in the revolutionary movement, actively participating as couriers, distributing literature, looking after various institutions and risking police repression, imprisonment, and even capital punishment. In both these cases, the women received a certain degree of support from their families in such activities, either overt or covert<sup>29</sup>.

The participants in the Indian women's movement hailed mostly from a small group of the urban educated families. They belonged to all major religious communities, but the upper-caste Hindus outnumbered others<sup>30</sup>.

The turn of the 19th century witnessed the dissemination of education to women. This was manifested in the emergence of women's organizations when women entered public life in larger numbers than before. This period saw the birth of organizations such as The Women's Indian Association (this was later merged with the All India Women's Conference). It also opened a new chapter in the women's movement for equality.

Demand for women's franchise was initiated in 1917 when a deputation of Indian women led by Sarojini Naidu, presented to the British Parliament a demand for the enfranchisement of women on the basis of equality with men. The crux of their demand was that when franchise conditions for India were being drawn up, women be recognized as people<sup>31</sup>.

As a result, in 1919 under the Montague – Chelmsford Reforms, about 10 lakh women obtained the voting right. However, women exercised their franchise for the first time only in 1932. Till 1926, no women ever got into any legislature. Muthulakshmi Reddy of Madras, a dedicated social worker was the first woman to be nominated to the Madras Legislative Council and she was also elected as the Deputy Chairperson of the Council. Devadasi Bill was introduced by her which saved the lives of these women from degradation. Kamla Devi Chattopadhyaya, a pioneer in the women's movement was the first to contest a seat from the South Kanara Constituency in 1926. Radha Bai Subbaraya, Renuka Roy, Annu Swaminathan were the earliest women who got into the central legislature<sup>32</sup>.

It was Mahatma Gandhi's call to women to join the freedom struggle that a new era dawned. He recognized the importance of women's participation in the freedom struggle. Gandhi appraised the women's potential for Satyagraha and for the social reconstruction as higher than that of men. He said, "In the non-violent struggle, women have an advantage over men, for women are any day superior to men in their religious devotion. Silent and dignified service is the badge of her sex. When she does a thing in the right spirit, she moves mountains"<sup>33</sup>.

This provided a wide-spread inspiration to women of all sections of society for joining

the freedom struggle and came to the forefront. Gandhi encouraged women to participate in all aspects and phases of nationalist activity, particularly in the constructive programme and the non-violent Satyagrahas, for it required not physical strength but moral courage and spiritual determination. In 1919, he launched an All India Satyagraha against the provocative enactment of the Rowlatt Act. Though Women did not participate extensively or very visibly in the Rowlatt Satyagraha, yet Gandhi gained considerable support from them<sup>34</sup>.

Thus, by reinterpreting the traditional roles of women, Gandhi sought to involve them in national politics. Later, when women wanted to break the limit set by him and were keen to take part in the Dandi March, he refused on the ground that they had a greater role to play than merely breaking salt laws. Gandhi was reluctant to permit women to join the Salt Satyagraha but prominent women like Kamla Devi Chattopadhyaya and Durgabai Deshmukh objected vigorously to Gandhi's initial reluctance. Lilavati Munshi and Sarojini Naidu organized the women and led them in different parts of Bombay to make salt<sup>35</sup>. The others who either led the struggle or lent support to it, were Vijayalakshmi Pandit, Krishna Hutheesingh, Lakshmi Menon, Violet Alva, Sushila Nayyar, Jaishri Raiji, Hansa Mehta, Maniben Patel, Zutshi, Mhatre Sisters, etc.

The mass participation by women was significant in the way that it represented a shift from their role as supportive auxiliaries to being direct participant in the struggle, even when it involved defiance of the leadership. Women were a new and different role confronting the traditional one. The Swadeshi movement, the non-cooperation movement and the Civil Disobedience movement drew them out from the seclusion of home and made them active participants in the struggle.

In 1931, a meeting of the representatives of women was held in Bombay under the presidentship of Sarojini Naidu which drafted a memorandum demanding immediate acceptance of universal adult franchise and equal political rights without any sex-discrimination. This was placed before the Round Table Conference which however, was turned down by the government.<sup>36</sup>

In 1931, at the Karachi Session of the Indian National Congress, Nehru piloted the 'Fundamental Rights Resolution' which accepted the principle of complete equality of men and women in political life. Women exercised their right to franchise widely in the election of 1937. In 1937 elections, 42 women got into the legislatures and 5 were nominated to the upper houses.<sup>37</sup>

In the 1942 'Quit India Movement', when all the top leaders were arrested and the movement became practically leaderless, women joined hands with others and carried it on by taking out processions, holding meetings, demonstrations and organizing strikes. Aruna Asaf Ali, Kalpana Joshi, Preeti Waddadar, Kanaklata Barua, Roopvati Jain, Durga Bai, Sushila

Devi and Usha Mehta were the famous figures of the 1942 movement. Kasturba Gandhi died in jail during the Quit India Campaign. In July 1943, in response to the clarion call of Subhash Chandra Bose, a women's regiment named 'The Rani of Jhansi Regiment' was formed in Singapore with Laxmi Sehgal as its captain<sup>38</sup>.

Women did not lag behind even in the making of the Constitution for free India. The Constituent Assembly was set up in October 1946, a body elected by the existing legislatures, had among its members Sarojini Naidu, Durgabai Deshmukh, Renuka Ray and Hansa Mehta among others to frame the Constitution for free India<sup>39</sup>.

Thus, through the independence movement women came out of their suppressed slave existence and entered the arena of public life. But, it was a tactical necessity of national liberation struggle. They did not work out any strategy for their own interests and emancipation. By subordinating their own interests to the national cause, they confirmed to the traditional ideal of the self-sacrificing women.

After independence, women have made inroads to public life mainly due to the so-called "male equivalence or kinship link". The assumption here is that women access political life with the support, backing and contacts of the family, in particular that of the husband. In a study made in 1998 wherein 15 women were surveyed, 1/3 of the women MPs, for example, have "family support" in the background. However, other points out that "male equivalence" is an inadequate conceptual framework. First, because it is the public sphere (e.g. state institutions, press, and political discourse) that has to be negotiated if the family decision to put forward a woman in politics is to succeed; it is not a private, but a public matter. Second, in many cases the husbands do not support the candidature of the wife at all<sup>40</sup>. Together with "kinship link" and state initiatives, an important factor impacting on women's access to political life seems to be social and political movements. These movements have created windows of opportunity and some women have been able to take advantage of these opportunities to access political life. For example, the national movement was an important mobilizer of women. Gandhi's contribution to bringing women into politics is well-documented; the left movement also mobilized women.

However, the 1993 passage of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act reserved 30 percent of seats in elected village councils (Panchayats) for women, which has brought more than 1 million elected women into the political life at the grassroots level. The passage of the "Panchayati Raj" was due to the Seventy-third Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992 which could have been enacted by all the States and Union Territories. A large proportion of women participated in voting throughout the country (with turnout rates slightly lower than those of

men), and numerous women were represented in all major parties in the national and state legislatures<sup>41</sup>

Political representation was initially based on the premise that it deals primarily with individuals, regardless of sex and equal opportunities should be granted of power and influence in society. It was believed that though very few women were actually joining politics, given time the overall change in terms of education and employment opportunities would necessarily percolate into the political sphere too and their representation would increase<sup>42</sup>.

In India, representation of women in the Lok Sabha has not crossed 10 per cent. In the First Lok Sabha there were only 22 women constituting 4.4 per cent of the House. It increased marginally over the years except in the 13th Lok Sabha there were 49 women members with 9.02 per cent. This percentage, however, looks dismal in comparison with the world average of 15.7 per cent.

The major problem for the women coming forward to contest and function successfully in leadership positions is that of the patriarchal value. The main plank of this is that women are subordinate to men, men should order and women should obey, men are strong, women are weak and men only are suitable for roles in public life. The more patient and the more tender should confine to and maintain the comforts and conveniences of home for the husband, children and others of the family. In this given situation, women hardly get free time to think of politics, leave away effective participation in it<sup>43</sup>.

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## SECULARISM RE-EXAMINED

Naidu Ashok

*Secularism, the much talked about thing in our country, appears to be the last thing on politicians mind in India. We have continued to witness incidents of communalism and fragmentation on that basis even after more than half-century into Independent India. It is more a campaign ideology than a practising one. India as a state is secular to much extent, but India as a society is still running the contagious fever of communalism. The paper is an effort towards re-examination of the status of secularism and its possibility in the country.*

Secularism has been the topic of discussion and controversy in this society during the last three decades or so, through a great ideological and political crisis, which generated so much heat and dust that it was impossible to see simple things clearly. India is poised to be secular but the grounds for secularism have been left unclear. Even the notorious communalists present themselves to be more secular than those who are secularist in the true spirit<sup>1</sup>. Post-Godhra incident in 2002 communal riots accompanied by events of arson, loot, and murder in urban as well as rural Gujarat and rural areas of Haryana and Maharastra have tarnished the image of Indian secularism and the reputation of Hinduism as a tolerant faith. The social climate is thoroughly vitiated and the atmosphere is surcharged with suspicion and hatred reminding of the pre-partition days. The nation is at the edge of a precipice. To prevent the collage, the nation must withdraw its steps from the path it has been led to under the influence of misguided elements. What needed are a deep national introspection and a sense of balance and direction. It is the responsibility of those who are at the helm of affairs in government and in political life and social life to provide these. But listening and watching to them on T.V. and elsewhere, it seems they are indulging in divisive politics and mutual recrimination oblivious of the national interest and the consequence of what they are saying and doing.

In May 2002, conference at Bangalore the RSS passed a resolution that the security of the minority community depends on the goodwill of the majority. The resolution was seen as an open threat to the minority, though the spokesman of the RSS tried to explain that it was not meant to be so. Security is the fundamental right of every citizen guaranteed by the Constitution. It is the responsibility of the state to preserve and protect this right, which does not depend on any body's goodwill. The RSS and organisations of the parivar have been constantly criticizing the Congress rulers for their appeasement of the minority, especially Muslims. They are saying that though Hindus are in majority they are being discriminated. They want the creation of Hindu Rashtra<sup>2</sup>.

In the present paper researcher attempts to study whether secularism is possible in India or it is re-examined in the minds of politicians and academicians. It also endeavans to examine whether secularism is the only way of developments in a plural society.

The public debate on secularism is acquiring some curious features. It is obvious that many persons have misgivings about it, but with the exception of a few mavericks, they are

generally not prepared to attack it openly. While this is true by and large of the intelligentsia, it is invariably the case with politicians. It would be unthinkable for any political leader, whether of the left or the right, to speak openly against secularism, just as it would be unthinkable for him to speak openly against equality<sup>3</sup>.

The most common way to throw doubt on secularism is for a person to say that he is not against secularism as such, what he is against is Pseudo – Secularism. He will then go on to say that there are far too many Pseudo – Secularist busybodies around and that they are the ones who are responsible for the discord between communities and ultimately, for communal violence. A professed adherents of Hindutva say that they are for secularism, that Hindutva itself is a form of secularism, indeed its most exalted form, only they prefer to call it religious pluralism rather than secularism, which is of western provenance. Religious pluralism, in their view, is not only a part of the Indian tradition, it is tolerant and undogmatic unlike secularism which has a whiff of dogmatic atheism about it and besides, lacks moral depth<sup>4</sup>.

#### GENESIS OF SECULARISM :

Secularism is the belief that politics, morals, education, art and literature, etc., are out to be freed from religion. The origin of this concept may be traced from the Renaissance, a movement that influenced Europe from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century. This movement aimed at the revival of the Greek Spirit of reason and sought to liberate the society from the dominance of religion<sup>5</sup>.

But the concept of secularism gathered real strength from the enlightenment, which had become a powerful force in Europe. From the 17th century onwards, discoveries in science challenged deeply held beliefs and faiths, which were an integral part of the broad canvas of religion. The application of these technologies and the rise of industrial societies necessitated the change in the social equilibrium that was then prevalent, that laid stress on reason and rationality. This is what helped the growth of secularism through the promotion of the scientific temper and rejection of the superstitions and faith in religion<sup>6</sup>.

Broadly speaking, two divergent concepts of secularism developed in western political thought. According to the first, which may be called liberal concept of secularism, the state should neither be religious nor anti-religious. It should not only have no religion but also be neutral towards it. There should be complete separation of religion and polities. Religion should be regarded as a private matter of an individual and there should be no place for it in public affairs. The second concept, which may be labelled as the Marxian concept, "regards secularism as an anti-thesis of religion. The Marxists believe that the inducement of religion was developed by the capitalist class to establish its hegemony and for countering the class struggle by using religion as opium"<sup>7</sup>.

**Emergence of secularism : The Indian Context:** Actually and sociologically speaking, secularism in India is a way of life. In a country where there are at least 12 religions, over 300

castes, nearly 4000, sub castes, over 20 languages, over 300 dialects, mixed traditions; the only way to reduce internal tension is to inculcate tolerance and co-existence<sup>8</sup>. The idea of secularism evolved not out of historical and religious debate but out of political exigency.

In India, secularism was emerging as the most dominant principle of nation building. The leaders of the Indian National Congress – Mahatma Gandhi, Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, Pandit Nehru and others – were deeply committed to the ideal of secularism<sup>9</sup>. The Constituent Assembly debates were extensive on the subject and only after considerable brainstorming secular principles were enshrined in our Constitution. We are using the term secularism here to mean 'Dharma Nirpekshta' (i.e., religious authorities should have no say in matters of the state). There is another interpretation also which is being imputed to secularism 'Sarva Dharma Samabhava' (equal respect for all religions<sup>10</sup>).

Secularism has been one of the essential elements in the basic structure of our constitution which lays down that: (1) The State has no religion, (2) all citizens however have fundamental right to follow and propagate their own religion, and (3) it is the duty of the state to protect life, liberty and property of all citizens, provide security to them and enable them to exercise their fundamental rights. The state will not discriminate between the citizens on the grounds of religion and language<sup>11</sup>.

**A Clear of Contradiction in Constitution :** While our constitution has been based on secularism or Dharma Nirapekshita. Our society is steeped in religion. Observance of religious festivals and rituals is part of our day-to-day life. Religious feelings govern our mode of thinking. Thus, there is a clear contradiction between the basic tenets of the Constitution and the characters of our society. These get reflected in our politics and public administration, which often work in a manner contrary to what is envisaged in the Constitution.

The caste and communal characterizes our politics inevitably in the conduct of public administration. While the Constitution envisages secularism in the sense of 'Dharma Nirapekshita' (religious authorities should have no say in matters of the state), our politicians have conveniently interpreted it as 'Sarva Dharma' Samabhav' (equal respect of for all religions). This has given free license to our Politicians holding high positions to freely participate in all religious functions with the official paraphernalia in attendance. 1970 onwards Central and different State Governments have started the practice of giving 'Iftar' parties to our Muslim brethren during 'Ramzan'. Now political leaders vie with each other to throw such lavish parties at national and state capitals and the practice continued even in the regime of a BJP Prime Minister. Wide publicity is given in the media as to who attended these parties and what was served. It is forgotten that such politicization of 'iftar' is a sacrilege to sacred religious practice much to the disgust of truly religious people. Moreover it creates a sense of discrimination. If iftar parties are given why not Diwali parties and Christmas parties<sup>12</sup>? The representation of the people act provides that appeals made on the grounds of religion to gather votes would be deemed to be a corrupt practice and would disqualify a candidate but this happen as a rule in all our elections. All

political parities use religion to gather votes. This starts from the selection of the candidates taking in to account the communal character of the constituency. Vote banks are systematically built on the basis of caste and religion and the very leaders who take advantage of these vote banks do so in the name of secularism. This has been the hypocrisy of our secular democracy<sup>13</sup>.

There are two consequences of this mixing up of religion, politics and public administration. First, it has given prominence in public life to religious leaders like 'Sants' and 'Mahants', 'Imams' and 'Priests'. They have started playing an active role in government's decision-making. The interference of religious leaders in administrative matters can prove dangerous to our secular democracy. Secondly, religious practices and festivals have started making serious inroads into the safety and convenience of our public life. In Maharashtra only, 'Ganapati' festival was public. Now even a 'Navaratri' festival has become a public observance. Pandals are erected on roads obstructing traffic. Loud music is played on public system disturbing peace. Namaz gathering spills over the roads and in retaliation 'Maha Aratries' are also similarly performed<sup>14</sup>.

**PSEUDO-SECULARS v/s REAL SECULARS :** After the BJP took up the Ramjanma Bhoomi issue in mid-eighties, secularism as an ideology came under sever attack. First is the charge that the state does not practice 'true' secularism. This has been the charge of the 'Sangh parivar' that there is an undue favouritism or appeasement shown towards the Muslim community by the state giving them privileges which were not enjoyed by the 'Hindu community'. It led to the belief that the Muslims were a 'pampered' minority. Post-Shah Bano case, and the states as well as the secular parties ambivalence towards a uniform civil code, this charge has also found sympathy among others who see this ambivalence as going against the principles of justice and legality, and also as evidence of political opportunism on the part of the Secular Parties. This belief has found further substance in allegation of 'protection' given by these parties to obscurantist Muslim clerics as well as criminals. In turn, BJP and its groups also came out with a concept of positive secularism of true secularism, meaning that the minority should not enjoy any special protection and all such provisions in the Constitution should be done away with. The BJP in its manifesto for the 1996 elections had proposed that Article 30 of the Constitution (giving the right to the minorities to establish their own cultural and educational Institutions) be removed. The BJP usually puts it as 'justice for all appeasement of none'<sup>15</sup>.

Secondly, 'the problem of identities' in India, which is to say that Indians tend to see themselves first as Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs or Christians, and then see themselves as Indians. This being the case the Indian identity is seen as an amalgam of several separate identities, the talk of a syncretic culture is, therefore, seen as an intellectual camouflage given to more co-existence, often uncomfortable among different communities and the argument stemming from this is that since Hindus form an overwhelming majority in the country it is desirable for the sake of building an Indian National Identity that the latter reflects a Hindu Identity<sup>16</sup>.

The third critique flows from the second – the charge of Muslim sectarianism. It is said that Muslims have failed to see themselves as Indians first and two historical truths are usually cited as evidence<sup>17</sup>. Firstly, the treatment by Muslim rulers of their co-religionists as preferred category and equally, the ill treatment of Hindus by them as apparent in the willful destruction of Hindu temples during their rule as well as application of discriminatory laws against them. Secondly, Jinnah's two-nation theory, which contributed to the creation of the separate state for Muslims, is viewed as proof of their super-national loyalties. This so, it is argued that who else but Hindus have a stake in the Indian nation-state. On deeper thinking it would appear that the demand for India as Hindu state arises out of a sense of insecurity which some sections of Hindu society feel even though Hindus are in the majority in this country<sup>18</sup>.

Fourthly, to blame the BJP of cynically exploiting communal sentiments for electoral gains is half-truth, because it has been done by every political party. Cynical building up of Sant Bhindranwala to marginalize the Akalis or Akalidai, for instance, proved catastrophic not only for the Congress party but also for the entire country.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, the wooing of Shahi Imam by the Janata Dal led National Front resulted into fall of its government at the center as the after effect of secularism<sup>20</sup>. If mullahas and sadhus, and mahants come to wield political clout, as it happens today, communal forces are bound to get string themed. It is amusing to note that we never hear them speaking against old traditions such as 'pardah' or the 'caste-system', polygamy or extravagant feasting etc., but they talk of religious identity. If the BJP is blamed to have been practicing majority communalism, the Congress and non-Congress parties should equally be held responsible for pampering minority communalism in our polity for their political gains, forgetting the fact that the indefinite variety of the land can only be preserved and enriched through a policy or substantive decentralisation and that a genuine federal set-up is the only solution of our problems. Nationalism cannot flourish in a country where millions of people are condemned to sub-human existence, whereas some fellow live in five-star luxury. Nationalism has to assume a character of an equalitarian dimension<sup>21</sup>.

During the election campaign, in 1998, 1999 & 2004 elections, it had been realized that the Indian society had accepted secularism as a way of life. Therefore, it invented a new debate. The Congress, they said was 'Pseudo-Secular' and they were the real secular. Thus even while attacking the notion of secularism, the BJP created a niche for itself in the controversy. According to its former president Lal Krishna Advani, Mohammad Ali Jinnah was the epitome of secularism<sup>22</sup>. Now Jinnah was not a practicing Muslim. He enjoyed his drink. He smoked and loved good things of life. He did not know Urdu and was opposed to Khilafat movement. All this is indeed true, but it is also true that he invoked the idea of Islam as a basis for a political state. The country was partitioned on that note<sup>23</sup>.

**CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS :** The real problem is that secularism is not an indigenous concept or philosophy. Our rulers, before the advent of the British, ruled according to the 'Dharmashashtra' or Shariat and gave freedom to other religious groups to follow their respective

religions and judged them according to their own religious beliefs and laws. The situation changed only after the British came and introduced modern secular laws<sup>24</sup>.

In India, there never was any struggle between religious bodies and the state as it was in Europe between the church and the state. Infact, there was never any organized clergy either among the Muslims or the Hindus. There was, thus, no question of any struggle for powers between the religions and the state as it happened in Europe. The philosophy of secularism came into existence only as a result of such a struggle. The church sought to control the state. The princes in Europe were subordinated to the church and desired to break free. When Martin Luther revolted against the authority of the church the princes joined him and after a great deal of struggle they could assert their independent authority. Thus came into existence the concept of a secular state as opposed to a church-dominated state. The process of continuous secularization as a result of industrialization helped strengthen the secular state philosophy<sup>25</sup>.

In India, secularism in politics was adopted voluntarily by the Indian National Congress to cope with the multi-religious situation. When the Congress was formed a section of the Muslims and others thought that it was a Hindu organization and hence remained indifferent to it. The Congress then tried to convince them that it was not against any religion and that it respected all religions. In order to reassure the minorities it elected the first three presidents from among them : Badruddin Tyabji (Muslim), Dadabhai Naoroji (Parsi) and W.C.Bonnerjee (Christian). Thus, right from the beginning the emphasis of the Congress secularism was on the multi-religiousness of the Indian society and its being sensitive to this situation<sup>26</sup>.

Shortly after independence, India adopted a new constitution providing a charter for a secular state and a secular concept of citizenship. This was dictated above all by the compulsions of history and of demography. A constitution that was the end-product of a nationalist movement that had resolutely opposed the two-nation theory could hardly prescribe a Hindu state or any kind of religious state. For Nehru and his generation having a secular state was not just a matter of convenience, it was also matter of honour<sup>27</sup>.

A secular legal and constitutional order is dictated also by the compulsions of demography. India is a land of many religions and within each religion of many sects and denominations. There are more Muslims in India than in any country in the world. Indonesia and India's Muslim population is larger than the total population of Britain, France or Germany. There are also populous minorities of Christians and Sikhs. It will be impossible to govern such a country without secular public institutions that treat citizens without fear or favour, irrespective of their religion.

In additions to the compulsions of fairness, secularization is driven also by the requirements of development and modernization. If we wish to have a modern educational system and a modern economic system, we must build secular institutions, secular schools, colleges and Universities, secular offices and factories and secular print and electronic media. M.N. Srinivasa

had famously defined secularization as follows : "The term secularization implies that what was previously regarded as religious is ceasing to be such, and it also implies a process of differentiation which results in the various aspects of society, economic, political, legal and moral, becoming increasingly discrete in relation to each other"<sup>28</sup>" It can not be too strongly emphasized that differentiation does not mean disconnection.

The differentiation of society is a long term evolutionary tendency, and India can attempt to reverse that tendency only as its own peril. Secularization does not mean that religious institutions will cease to exist. It only means that they will cease to encompass or regulate all the other institutions of society. These other institutions will then act relatively autonomously in their respective specialized domains, such as those of education, science, finance, administration communication and so on.

India has in the past 56 years of its secular republic, gone through a roller-coaster ride of religious and casteist strife. Till now it has survived as a secular nation state and as an integrated-multi-cultural country.

Atleast now we have to realize that religious tolerance has been the basic tenet of India's ancient civilization and it is also the hallmark of the modern age of globalization. There should be sense of mutual trust and cooperation among all the sections of society. We should not waste our time in religious discords but rather move ahead with the use of science, and technology to make our lives better, richer and fuller. We should follow the foot steps of European nations, which have forgotten their enmities and wars over centuries and have come together as a single economic and political entity.

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## THE WEST ASIAN OIL AND THE GREAT POWERS

Shabana Sultan

*Oil is not only the most important item of the world commerce, it is a strategic commodity. The economic and military machines of the developed countries run on oil which, in most cases, is imported from the Gulf. In the past decades there was an intense struggle between the great powers of the world to grab the oil concessions of the West Asian region, the Palestinian question is the fundamental cause of the oil being used as a political instrument. Today it's America, the super power of the world, which is revolving and revolving around West Asia; it already destructed the whole country like Iraq, killed millions of innocent people, just to have a hold on Iraq's oil only. But it never showed oil as a reason behind the attack on Iraq. Now America is making strategy to attack Iran, the second largest pool of untapped petroleum in the world, here too President Bush is not mentioning oil as a reason for war with Iran.*

In the global context, oil and its products account for more than half the physical volume of the world trade. Oil is not only the most important item of the world commerce, it is also a strategic commodity. The economic and military machines of the developed countries run on oil which, in most cases, is imported from the Gulf. Until recently, the Western Europe was the principle consumer of the Gulf oil, but the growing gap between the world supply and demand in the early 1970s, brought in the United States, Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union as new customers. The ever increasing and insatiable demand for petroleum products based upon the compelling needs of this highly industrialised and mechanised age made the West Asia economically a more strategic area than it has ever been in the past, the great wealth of oil coupled with its importance to the rest of the world has had profound effect upon the people and the states of the West Asia early in the twentieth century, the prospects of finding oil in the Ottoman Empire began to interest the great oil companies of Europe and the United States and the governments of the great powers. Foreign concession hunters sought to secure control of Turkish petroleum deposits which became an added source of international rivalry.

The rise of oil to the central position in the world's energy picture was relatively a new phenomenon. At the beginning of the twentieth century, coal occupied the dominant position; at the onset of the First World War, as much as 75 percent of the world's energy consumption came from coal. Coal's preferred position deteriorated rapidly during the next 40 years, however, as more and more oil was found in exploitable locations. Oil gradually surpassed coal as the world's dominant energy source. The amazing impact of oil upon the West Asian region can not be fully understood without some knowledge of the international struggle of the oil companies

to obtain control of oil deposits, and of the history of the exploration and development of petroleum in West Asia.

The knowledge of the existence of petroleum in West Asia goes back to ancient times: In 1900, General Kitabji Khan, Persia's Commissioner General asked Sir Henry Drummond, former British Minister in Teheran, at a Paris exposition to find someone in London who would be willing to invest in the exploitation of oil. Sometime later General Kitabji was summoned to London, where he proposed his plan for exploitation of minerals of Persia to William Knox D'Arcy. After D'Arcy had had the possibilities of the Persian fields investigated by a geologist, H.T. Burns, he sent to Teheran his representatives Alfred M. Marriot and Mr. Cotte with General Kitabji to obtain a concession in his name.<sup>1</sup> After passing some difficulties because of Russian influence the concession was signed in D'Arcy's name on May 28, 1901, Before the oil fields began to produce in sufficient quantities, D'Arcy's original investment was almost exhausted and he called for the financial assistance. The British Admiralty became interested, apparently fearing that the concession might fall in the hands of the American or the Dutch oil trusts. It asked D'Arcy to defer negotiations with foreigners until British interests could be found to invest in his undertaking. The Admiralty advised Lord Strathcona of Burmah oil company to cooperate with D'Arcy. And in May 1905 the Concessions Syndicate Ltd. was formed, with D'Arcy as director. It took over assets of the First exploitation company and provided financial resources for continuing resources.<sup>2</sup> The additional resources were soon exhausted, but in the middle of the 1908 oil in commercial quantities was discovered at Masjid-i-Suleiman and on April 4, 1909 the Anglo-Persian oil company was formed with an initial capital of £ 2000,000.<sup>3</sup>

During the early years of concession two important events took place which deeply effected the future history of Persia as well as the development of oil, one, on August 5, 1906, Shah Mozaffar-ed-Din issued a proclamation granting constitutional government<sup>4</sup> (for Persia), and second, in August 1907, an agreement between England and Russia was signed dividing Persia into three zones: the Northern-under Russian influence, and reserved for Russian nationals to seek concessions; the Southern-under British influence, and reserved for British nationals; and the Central zone-as a neutral zone for the two great rival powers. This agreement neither admitted Persia to partnership nor even to consultation. The result was the weakening of the control of the Teheran government over the territory under the influence of Russia and Britain.<sup>5</sup>

After this concession all the super powers were in queue to pursue the oil rich countries for concessions. The Americans on their part showed no great desire to search for oil until the end of the First World War, but when they saw how much

American oil had been consumed during the war, from then a continuous struggle had been waged between the U.S. and the Great Britain for the exploitation of oil resources and in seeking oil concessions. Now the American oil interests became active in the region. The American group represented by Teagle continued to negotiate with the Turkish Petroleum Company. And till the year 1928, the shareholders of the Turkish Petroleum Company were: Anglo Persian Oil Company, Royal Dutch Shell Company, Campagne Francaise des Petroles, the American Group and S.C. Gulbenkian. On July 31, 1928, all the participants of the Turkish Petroleum Company signed a group agreement which limited the activities of each participant in a specified area, which was marked out on a map attached to the agreement by red line, hence it was called the 'Red Line Agreement'<sup>6</sup> and the name of the Turkish Petroleum Company was changed to 'Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC).'<sup>7</sup>

Saudi Arabia was a British protectorate and no oil concession would be given without the approval of the British government. But the relationship between Ibn Saud and Britain was no longer be that of a protector and protected, and Britain recognised Ibn Saud as an independent ruler. The financial situation of Saudi Arabia was in doldrums. Ibn Saud was finding ways and means to make the country's financial situation a little better, the concession seekers were in queue to get concessions for the region but because of the Red Line Agreement it became a little difficult to adjust. Finally, the Standard Oil Company of California (SOCAL) obtained a concession for Saudi Arabia on May 29, 1933.<sup>8</sup> To carry on its operations in Saudi Arabia, this company created the California Arabian Oil Company which became the Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO) in 1934, with the Texas Oil Company having a fifty percent share.<sup>9</sup> Ibn Saud granted the concessions to American company because of the pressure exerted on him by the governments of other foreign countries and America was the only country which was making his choice of money.

In order to preserve the dwindling resources of oil, the availability of West Asian oil must become the cardinal aspect of American oil policy and American foreign policy; but it was sure that America wanted the oil just for her profits to secure a dominant position over Britain and France, while for her own consumption America was having enough oil, for the British and French the situation was quite different. They did not have any alternative resources other than West Asia. Their economies did not permit them to depend upon United States for oil. For solving this problem the British approached Northern Iran which was under Russian dominance, Russia prevented the establishment of other foreign companies in her area of influence, while the Iranians tried very hard to induce American companies to exploit their Northern fields, however,

neither Soviet Russia nor Great Britain was willing to permit the Americans enter into Northern Iran. On the other hand, the relations between the Iranian government and the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company which were tolerably good began to deteriorate because the Iranians had started to realise that Great Britain was making enormous profits out of the great potentialities of their oil resources which they could use for the welfare of their own country. Since the outbreak of the Second World War the relations became more intense on the issue of withdrawal of Allied troops from Iranian territory; on the other hand, after the war the oil prices dropped. The country's basic needs were not fulfilled, together with difficulties and power politics of super powers set the stage for the nationalisation of Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in 1951 (in March 1951 the Company's name changed to National Iranian Oil Company). This gathering storm in Iran prompted ARAMCO to conclude an agreement with Saudi Arabia inaugurating the principle of equal profit sharing. The Americans were primarily concerned with the profit sharing and with keeping the Soviet Union far from entering the area.

The Anglo-French-Israeli attack on Egypt in 1956, greatly affected the pace of the political arena of the Arab region. In many ways the stakes had become more narrowly regional, and the situation was growing more intricate because of the tendency of the Arab - Israeli conflict. It set into motion a tide of Arab nationalist sentiments across the Arab world.

As the IPC was composed of four different groups, the prices charged from the partners were very low, but the profits which went to the partners from IPC were very high; this attitude of the company was not accepted by the Iraqi people. The relations between the government and IPC started to deteriorate, Iraqi people wanted to make their country prosperous, wanted to use their money for themselves. This sentiment led the Iraqis towards the revolution of 1958. The Iraq government demanded the share of Iraq in the profits of the company and higher royalties. To them, the foreign companies were exploiters of Iraqi resources, thieving imperialists who had managed to obtain extraordinary concessions and privileges. Through this emotional sentiment the Iraqi people threatened the company for the nationalisation of IPC. Same was the case with Saudi Arabia, the government was fed up with the oppression of the company, but Saudi Arabia was not ready for nationalisation because of the task of technical know how, the task of the capital necessary to maintain the operation and development of the industry and to the most, the task of international market, to all this, Ahmad Zaki Yamani proposed a 20 percent government participation.

Since 1959, three collective instrumentalities were set up in the West Asia for overall purpose of uniting against the oil companies:

- a) the Arab Petroleum Congress,
- b) the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC),
- c) the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC).

On February 13, 1959, the British Petroleum Company of Iran announced a cut of 18 cents per barrel on its West Asian oil, the other companies operating in the region soon followed it. This price reduction amounted a decrease in total income.<sup>10</sup>

After the June 1967 Arab-Israel war and the subsequent closure of Suez Canal and a general increase in world demand for oil, the basic relationship pattern between the governments and the companies changed, as a result the role of OPEC changed, meanwhile the devaluation of dollar became an acute issue and subject of negotiations between the governments and the companies. An extraordinary conference of OPEC members was convened in Beirut in September 1971, it adopted two resolutions, one on government participation and the other on dollar parity in oil revenues. Hectic negotiations began between the governments and the companies, the matter of dollar devaluation was settled but the question of participation was not easily resolved. Ahmad Zaki Yamani, who negotiated participation for the Persian Gulf countries, warned the companies that the alternative to the participation was the nationalisation, for which the Arab public was ready.<sup>11</sup>

The Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) was the youngest of the limited efforts instrumentalities, it was organised in January 1968, in the face of the consequences for West Asian oil of the Arab-Israel war in 1967. Its conveners, Saudi Arabia and Libya were the greatest victims of the stoppage of oil production during the war and they attempted to remove oil from political interference in future. Its membership at first restricted to Arab countries having oil as the principle and basic source of national income, this condition was waived in 1971. OAPEC's main concern was to take maximum benefits from its member countries' national resources. In 1970s, the host countries' policies tended to bifurcate the radical revolutionary states favoured nationalisation, trying to achieve maximum control of the oil industry through negotiated agreements with the companies.<sup>12</sup>

The out break of Arab-Israeli war in 1973, catalysed the situation, the action taken by the Arab oil producing states in response to the Arab-Israel war of October 1973, was very strong. The Arab states decided the general production cut-back and selective embargoes on exports to certain states. The Arab boycott implemented the concept of using oil as a weapon, Saudi Arabia warned the United States that an

unfriendly American policy might adversely affect the availability of Arab oil, on the other hand OPEC decided to increase the prices of crude oil several fold. In the following weeks and months after the war, the Arab oil ministers held a series of meetings at which the boycott policy was refined, the first meeting held in Kuwait from 17-19 October 1973. In this meeting a binding decision was made to cut monthly production by a minimum of 5 percent from September level of production, Saudi Arabia provided leadership and guidance to the embargo, the united countries established classes of consumer countries, i.e. hostile, friendly and neutral:<sup>13</sup>

- a) hostile, to which a ban on exports was to be applied,
- b) friendly, which were to benefit the September level of exports,
- c) neutral, to which the remaining production was to be apportioned

Hostile- U.S., Holland, Portugal, South Africa And Rhodesia to which a full embargo was imposed.

Friendly- those countries which had adjusted their policies in favour of the Arabs such as Japan, Belgium, West Germany and Italy for them to supply to September level of exports.

#### Neutral- (EEC countries).

Iraq was the only dissenter among the Arab states, it opposed the cut back decision because it did not differentiate sufficiently between friends and foes, but it soon joined the rest of the Arab states and proclaimed a full ban on exports to the United States and Holland.

The EEC countries were taken in the neutral group because they strongly urged the forces on both sides to return to the original ceasefire line and urged for Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories and for the recognition of the rights of the Palestinians. This declaration of EEC evoked a sympathetic response in the Arab states. On November 21, 1973, the Secretary of State Henry Kissinger issued a warning that the United States might have to take counter measure if the Arabs continued their embargo. In response to this warning Sheikh Ahmad Zaki Yamani declared that American counter measure against the oil embargo would prompt Arab producers to reduce production by as much as 80 percent and any military intervention would result to the destruction of oil factories.<sup>14</sup>

The October war which ended not in a victory for either party but in an uneasy ceasefire, made necessary a further classification of collective Arab policies with this

view an Arab Summit Conference convened in Algiers from 26-28 November 1973, the Arab heads of states declared themselves prepared to pursue a peaceful solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of two principles :

- a) Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories, headed by Jerusalem, and
- b) restoration of the national rights of the Palestinian people.

The Conference decided to ask the West European countries to stop their military and economic assistance to Israel, as for the Asian countries they were to be persuaded to sever all political, economic and cultural relations with Israel. India's response was very prompt, the spurt in oil prices in 1972-73 and the scare about the impending oil scarcity necessitated India to strengthen its relations with the West Asian countries. India lost influence entirely with Israel and became a passive factor, it abandoned her principles and interests without any incremental leverage. India's support to the Palestinian cause also became stronger and firmer. The secret provisions made to strengthen Arab relations with Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to ensure a supply of arms to the Arabs.

By that time the United States intensified its search for peaceful disengagement in the West Asian conflicts, and in response Egypt encouraged these endeavour, and began to press for the relaxation of oil embargo, but Saudi Arabia adamantly rejected the lifting up of the embargo against U.S. until some tangible progress had been made in the Arab-Israeli conflict. The subsequent agreement of the January 17, 1974, on the disengagement of the Arab and Israeli forces reached under American auspices, Egypt again came forward for lifting up of the embargo. The Tripoli Conference of March 1974, brought an agreement to ease or remove the boycott, the Arab states agreed to end the embargo against the United States on the ground that a shift had taken place in Washington's Arab policies, as evidenced by its active role in bringing about an Egyptian - Israeli disengagement.

To counter balance the Arab attitude and Arab strategies the United States, Canada, Japan, Turkey and other twelve European states finally created the International Energy Agency (IEA) on November 15, 1974, in Paris. The main features of the IEA were :

- a) establishment of an energy sharing agreement among the major consumer countries in case of a new embargo,
- b) setting up of a cooperative conservation and energy development programme,

- c) establishment of a \$ 25 million fund to recycle petro money into deficit countries,
- d) the convening of a conference among the producer and consumer countries.<sup>15</sup>

The 1973 oil embargo created a dynamic change in the international political system, a tremendous increase in world oil consumption during 1967 and 1973 wars dried up the excess productive capacity outside West Asia. OPEC countries emerged as the key suppliers and it enabled OPEC to rise oil price from \$ 3 per barrel to \$ 36 per barrel. This increase prompted the consumer countries for investment in non OPEC countries for exploration and development, for all this the consumer countries established the IEA.

In any way, super powers are not ready to leave West Asia. They always want to protect their strategic and economic interest in the region. America wanted to protect its interests from Soviets whose military presence in the region was always a matter of worry for Americans. After 1973, war Soviets started to cultivate a good relationship with Iraq, Syria, South Yemen and Libya by supplying them with modern military hardware so as to enable them to fight their war against Israel. Soviet Union always envisaged the control of Iranian oil, if opportunity arises. To counter balance the Soviet strategies the United States started to think for the establishment of its military bases in the region. United States Department of State and Defense explored the possibility of reaching agreements with one or more of the states in the Gulf and Mediterranean. The areas considered were Mombasa, Kenya, Barbera, Somalia and Arabian sea islands of Masira belonging to Oman. These locations had the necessary infrastructure and could provide adequate support to naval and air forces of Rapid Deployment Force which later in 1983 was discharged to CENTCOM as the United States Central Command.

Oil was a great factor in the West Asian politics, even the big powers who produce oil have been interested in the control of oil resources of the West Asian region to maintain their supremacy and preserve their own limited resources for future. The region was influenced more by Europe than the East despite the fact that Asian countries identify with Arabs more than the Europeans. The Palestinian question is the fundamental cause of the oil being used as a political instrument. Annual world energy use is up by five times since 1945. Increases are now driven by massive developing countries—China, India, Brazil—growing and emulating first or at least second world consumption standards. Sharply increased consumption is the formula for global oil depletion within the next few decades.

The situation is especially critical in the US. With barely 4% of the world's population,

the US consumes 26% of the world's energy. But the US produced only 9 million barrels per day (MBD) in 2000 while consuming 19 MBD. It made up the difference by importing 10 MBD, or 53% of its needs. By 2020, the US Department of Energy forecasts domestic demand will grow to 25 MBD but production will be down to 7 MBD. The daily shortfall of 18 MBD or 72% of needs, will need all to be imported.<sup>16</sup>

Perhaps it goes without saying but it deserves repeating anyway that oil is the backbone of 'industrial' civilization—the one thing without which such civilization cannot exist. All of the world's 600 million automobiles depend on oil. So do virtually all other commodities and critical processes: airlines, chemicals, plastics, medicines, agriculture, heating, etc. Almost all of the increase in world food productivity over the past 50 years is attributable to increases in the use of oil-derived additives: pesticides; herbicides; fungicides; fertilizers; and machinery.

When oil is gone, civilisation will be stupendously different. The onset of rapid depletion will trigger convulsions on a global scale, including, likely, global pandemics and die-offs of significant portions of the world's human population. The 'have' countries will face the necessity kicking the 'have-nots' out of the global lifeboat in order to assure their own survival. Even before such conditions are reached, inelastic supply interacting with inelastic demand will drive the price of oil and oil-derived commodities through the stratosphere, effecting by market forces alone massive shifts in the current distribution of global wealth.

If the US economy is not to grind to a halt under these circumstances it must choose one of three alternate strategies: dramatically lower its living standards (something it is not willing to do); substantially increase the energy efficiency of its economy; or make up the shortfall by securing supplies from other countries. President Bush's National Energy Policy published in March 2001 explicitly commits the US to the third choice: Grab the Oil. It is this choice that is now driving US military and national security policy. And, in fact, the past 60 years of US policy in the Middle East can only be understood as the effort to control access to the world's largest supply of oil.<sup>17</sup>

More recent examples of national strategy in bondage to the compulsion for oil include US support for Saddam Hussein in the Iran/Iraq War. The Gulf war and, of course, the most recent invasion of Iraq to seize its oilfields and forward position US forces for an invasion of neighbouring Saudi Arabia when it is inevitably destroyed by internal civil war. And under a Grab the Oil strategy, militarisation of US society will only deepen.

The reason is that a very major portion of the world's oil is, by accident of geology, in the hands of states hostile to the US. Fully 60% of the world's proven reserves of oil are in the Persian Gulf. They lie beneath Muslim countries undergoing a religious revolution that wants to return the industrial world to a pre-modern order governed by a fundamentalist Islamic

theocracy. Saudi Arabia alone controls 25% of all the world's oil, more than that of North America, South America, Europe and Africa combined. Kuwait, Iran and Iraq, each control approximately 10% of the world's oil.

As long as the US chooses Grab the Oil alternative, the implications for national policy are inescapable. The combination of all these facts—fixed supply, rapid depletion, lack of alternatives, severity of consequences, and hostility of current stockholding countries—drives the US to adopt an aggressive (pre-emptive) military posture and to carry out a nakedly colonial expropriation of resources from weaker countries around the world.

This is why the US operates some 700 military bases around the world and spends over half a trillion dollars per year on military affairs, more than all the rest of the world—its 'allies' included—combined. This is why the Defense Department's latest Quadrennial Review stated, "The US must retain the capability to send well-armed and logically supported forces to critical points around the globe, even in the face of enemy opposition."<sup>18</sup>

But the provocation occasioned by grabbing the oil, especially from nations ideologically hostile to the US, means that military attacks on the US and the recourse to military responses will only intensify until the US is embroiled in unending global conflict.

In his first released tape after 9/11, Osama bin Laden stated that he carried out the attacks for three reasons: 1) to drive US military forces from Saudi Arabia, the most sacred place of Islam; 2) to avenge the deaths of over half a million Iraqi children killed, according to UNICEF, as a result of the US-sponsored embargo of the 1990s; and, 3) to punish US sponsorship of Israeli oppression against the Palestinian people. Oil and the need to control it are critically implicated in all three reasons.<sup>19</sup>

In response to the 9/11 attacks, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld stated that the US was engaged in "...a thirty to forty year war (!) against fundamentalist Islam."<sup>20</sup> It is the fever of war, of course, that becomes the all-purpose justification for the rollback of civil liberties. Lincoln used the Civil War to justify the suspension of habeas corpus. Roosevelt used the cover of the World War II to inter hundreds of thousands of Japanese Americans. And now, Bush is using the self-ratcheting "War on Terror" to effect even more sweeping, perhaps permanent rescissions of civil liberties.<sup>21</sup>

The alternative to Grab the Oil is to dispense with the hobbling dependency on oil itself and to quickly wean the country off it. Call it the path of Energy Reconfiguration. It is to declare a modern day Manhattan Project aimed at minimizing the draw down in the world's finite stocks of oil, extending their life, and mitigating the calamity inherent in their rapid exhaustion. It means building a physical infrastructure to the economy that is based on an alternative to

oil. And it means doing this not unilaterally or militarily as the US is doing now, but in peaceful partnership with other countries of the world—the other counties in our shared global lifeboat that are also threatened by the end of oil.

In more specific terms, energy reconfiguration means retrofitting all of the nation's buildings, both commercial and residential, to double their energy efficiency. It means a crash program to shift the transportation system—cars, trucks—to a basis that uses perhaps half as much oil per year. This is well within reach of current technology. Energy Reconfiguration means using biotechnology to develop crops that require much less fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and machinery to harvest. It means refitting industrial and commercial processes—lighting, heating, appliances, automation, etc.—so that they, too, consume far less energy than they do today. It means increasing efficiency, reducing consumption, and building sustainable, long-term alternatives in every arena in which the economy uses oil.

As the United States gears up for an attack on Iran, one thing is certain: the Bush administration will never mention oil as a reason for going to war. As in the case of Iraq, weapons of mass destruction (WMD) will be cited as the principal justification for an American assault. "We will not tolerate the construction of a nuclear weapon [by Iran],"<sup>22</sup> is the way President Bush put it in a much-quoted 2003 statement. But just as the failure to discover illicit weapons in Iraq undermined the administration's use of WMD as the paramount reason for its invasion, so its claim that an attack on Iran would be justified because of its alleged nuclear potential should invite widespread skepticism. More important, any serious assessment of Iran's strategic importance to the United States should focus on its role in the global energy equation. Because no war is ever prompted by one factor alone, and it is evident from the public record that many considerations, including oil, played a role in the administration's decision to invade Iraq. Likewise, it is reasonable to assume that many factors -- again including oil -- are playing a role in the decision-making now underway over a possible assault on Iran.<sup>23</sup>

Just exactly how much weight the oil factor carries in the administration's decision-making is not something that we can determine with absolute assurance at this time, but given the importance energy has played in the careers and thinking of various high officials of this administration, and given Iran's immense resources, it would be ludicrous not to take the oil factor into account -- and yet you can rest assured that, as relations with Iran worsen, American media reports and analysis of the situation will generally steer a course well clear of the subject (as they did in the lead-up to the invasion of Iraq).

When talking about oil's importance in American strategic thinking about Iran, it is important to go beyond the obvious question of Iran's potential role in satisfying America's future energy requirements. Because Iran occupies a strategic location on the north side of

the Persian Gulf, it is in a position to threaten oil fields in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, and the United Arab Emirates, which together possess more than half of the world's known oil reserves. Iran also sits athwart the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow waterway through which, daily, 40% of the world's oil exports pass. In addition, Iran is becoming a major supplier of oil and natural gas to China, India, and Japan, thereby giving Tehran additional clout in world affairs. It is these geopolitical dimensions of energy, as much as Iran's potential to export significant quantities of oil to the United States, that undoubtedly govern the administration's strategic calculations.

According to the most recent tally by Oil and Gas Journal, Iran houses the second-largest pool of untapped petroleum in the world, an estimated 125.8 billion barrels. Only Saudi Arabia, with an estimated 260 billion barrels, possesses more; Iraq, the third in line, has an estimated 115 billion barrels. With this much oil -- about one-tenth of the world's estimated total supply -- Iran is certain to play a key role in the global energy equation, no matter what else occurs. And it is not just oil that Iran possesses in great abundance, but also natural gas. According to Oil and Gas Journal, Iran has an estimated 940 trillion cubic feet of gas, or approximately 16% of total world reserves (Only Russia, with 1,680 trillion cubic feet, has a larger supply.) As it takes approximately 6,000 cubic feet of gas to equal the energy content of 1 barrel of oil, Iran's gas reserves represent the equivalent of about 155 billion barrels of oil. This, in turn, means that its combined hydrocarbon reserves are the equivalent of some 280 billion barrels of oil, just slightly behind Saudi Arabia's combined supply. At present, Iran is producing only a small share of its gas reserves, about 2.7 trillion cubic feet per year. This means that Iran is one of the few countries capable of supplying much larger amounts of natural gas in the future.<sup>24</sup>

What all this means is that Iran will play a critical role in the world's future energy equation. This is especially true because the global demand for natural gas is growing faster than that for any other source of energy, including oil. While the world currently consumes more oil than gas, the supply of petroleum is expected to contract in the not-too-distant future as global production approaches its peak sustainable level -- perhaps as soon as 2010 -- and then begins a gradual but irreversible decline. The production of natural gas, on the other hand, is not likely to peak until several decades from now, and so is expected to take up much of the slack when oil supplies become less abundant. Natural gas is also considered a more attractive fuel than oil in many applications, especially because when consumed it releases less carbon dioxide (a major contributor to the greenhouse effect).

No doubt the major U.S. energy companies would love to be working with Iran today in developing these vast oil and gas supplies. India is also keen to obtain oil and gas from Iran. In January, the Gas Authority of India Ltd. (GAIL) signed a 30-year deal with the National

Iranian Gas Export Corp. for the transfer of as much as 7.5 million tons of LNG to India per year. The deal, worth an estimated \$50 billion, will also entail Indian involvement in the development of Iranian gas fields. Even more noteworthy, Indian and Pakistani officials are discussing the construction of a \$3 billion natural gas pipeline from Iran to India via Pakistan an extraordinary step for two long-term adversaries. If completed, the pipeline would provide both countries with a substantial supply of gas and allow Pakistan to reap \$200-\$500 million per year in transit fees.<sup>25</sup>

Japan has also broken ranks with Washington on the issue of energy ties with Iran. In early 2003, a consortium of three Japanese companies acquired a 20% stake in the development of the Soroush-Nowruz offshore field in the Persian Gulf, a reservoir thought to hold 1 billion barrels of oil. One year later, the Iranian Offshore Oil Company awarded a \$1.26 billion contract to Japan's JGC Corporation for the recovery of natural gas and natural gas liquids from Soroush-Nowruz and other offshore fields.<sup>26</sup>

When considering Iran's role in the global energy equation, therefore, Bush administration officials have two key strategic aims: a desire to open up Iranian oil and gas fields to exploitation by American firms, and concern over Iran's growing ties to America's competitors in the global energy market.

The Iranian leadership is well aware that it faces a serious threat from the Bush administration and is no doubt taking whatever steps it can to prevent such an attack. Here, too, oil is a major factor in both Tehran's and Washington's calculations.

So, even while publicly focusing on Iran's weapons of mass destruction, key administration figures are certainly thinking in geopolitical terms about Iran's role in the global energy equation and its capacity to obstruct the global flow of petroleum. As was the case with Iraq, the White House is determined to eliminate this threat once and for all. And so, while oil may not be the administration's sole reason for going to war with Iran, it is an essential factor in the overall strategic calculation that makes war likely.

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## PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE : A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Karuna Singh

*This essay is an attempt to examine the emergence and growth of the Prime Minister's Office in India. The article will reflect upon how this office originated and expanded in terms of staff as well as functioning and how this office was used by each Prime Minister right from Jawaharlal Nehru to Atal Behari Vajpayee. This will further explain that although this office is extra-constitutional yet it holds prime position in our political set up. This will also provide us with the insight that in the Indian Political System, the Prime Minister occupies a pivotal position thus any office attached to it automatically increases in its power and stature. This office has a proper structure and every department / ministry is closely scrutinised here, so to say a parallel government can be seen. It will further explain the role of the Principal Secretary, which makes one's understanding clear about how the Prime Minister's Office plays the rôle and how with every Prime Minister importance of the Prime Minister's Office changes.*

The emergence of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) can be seen much before the Independence of the country. The Prime Minister's Office earlier known as Prime Minister's Secretariat (PMS) was created for the immediate purpose of assuming the function discharged till then by the Secretary to the Governor-General, which was taken over by the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, after the independence. The Prime Minister took over almost all the functions which the Governor-General prior to the independence performed as the executive head of the government. In order to continue with the same assistance provided to the Governor-General, our first Prime Minister also felt the need of having a Secretarial support in the functioning of the government. The purpose of this office was to give Secretarial assistance to the Governor-General which was handled by the Secretary. After independence the same office was set up as a personal secretariat of the Prime Minister which was known as 'Prime Minister's Secretariat'. The need for setting up of the office was to provide an extra-support system to the Prime Minister so that he can devote more time in dealing with important matters.<sup>1</sup>

Paul H. Appleby in 1954 recommended the establishment of Organization and Methods (O&M) Division in the Cabinet Secretariat which was supposed to be directly under the Prime Minister. After a decade in March 1964, Prime Minister<sup>2</sup> Lal Bahadur Shastri established Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) under the Chairmanship of Morarji Desai. The ARC which is also known as Deshmukh Study team discussed to provide adequate support to the Indian Prime Minister. It was accepted by everyone that the Prime Minister need some sort of support system to handle the ever increasing work. In this context two schools of thought emerged, one suggested that the existing machinery (institutions) should be used and other recommended setting up of the Prime Minister's Office to provide direct support to the Prime Minister. Thus, amidst the whole discussion the Prime Minister's Secretariat came

into existence. The Prime Minister's Secretariat emerged within this context and discourse.<sup>3</sup>

The Prime Minister's Office is an extra-constitutional growth which finds no mention in the Indian Constitution.<sup>4</sup> In this regard, the evolution of this office may be seen as the result of the development of a convention over the years in Independent India. This office was, however, given the status of a 'Department' under the Government of India (GOI), Allocation of Business Rules, 1961. The GOI Allocation of Business Rules 1961 gives brief explanation possible about the Prime Minister's Office, merely stating tasks of the two Secretariats/Offices as under:

- 1) Prime Minister's Office: To provide Secretarial assistance to the Prime Minister.
- 2) Cabinet Secretariat: - (i) Secretarial assistance to the committees; (ii) Rules of Business.

From the elucidation it is evident that the overall idea was to strengthen the cabinet secretariat and not to give prominence to the Prime Minister's Office. The Prime Minister's Office had perhaps not started actually functioning in very striking way till 1961-62, as Jawaharlal Nehru used to take decisions on his own without depending upon the office. As a result, the Prime Minister was very much in the limelight but not his office as it was functioning on a low key, that is merely as a support providing institution to the Prime Minister. It was only during the tenure of Lal Bahadur Shastri as Prime Minister that the office was highlighted. The reason could have been that he lacked charismatic personality and overall knowledge and information like Nehru.

In 1977, Janata Party regime came to power with Morarji Desai as the Prime Minister. He brought the change in the nomenclature of Prime Minister's Secretariat to Prime Minister's Office which is better known by its acronym PMO thereafter. This was done to tone down the influence of this office in the overall functioning of the central government. However, this idea to reduce the importance of the office remained only in theory whereas in reality this office acquired extra-constitutional authority during the Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi's tenure. It can be considered as a regular & well established institution as every Prime Minister depended upon it. During Lal Bahadur Shastri's tenure the office acquired shape & later it got prominence during Indira Gandhi's period. Although Morarji Desai tried to make changes, that is he changed its name & even reduced the size of the office, this office has survived and has existed since Independence & continues to remain the most important centre of power. In this process it has even faced bitter criticism about concentrating power & influencing decision making at every level.<sup>5</sup>

Some scholars reveal that there is nothing specific which mentions that the Principal

Secretary to the Prime Minister should be either a serving or a retired civil servant. But in practice, we find that right from the Independence till date the Principal Secretary has been either a serving or a retired civil servants. Even during the tenure of Atal Behari Vajpayee, Principal Secretary to Prime Minister was not only a high ranking retired civil servant of the Indian Foreign Service Cadre, but was also a person who held an important position in the party after his retirement from the service. But, what is seen as most essential requirement for the Principal Secretary is the trust of the Prime Minister. The office has a certain Code of Conduct and Rules of Business and its functioning is noted in a written document. However, due to the very confidential nature of this office, the details although required, are not available even for academic or scholarly research.<sup>7</sup>

The Prime Minister's Office acts as a link between the Prime Minister and his Ministers, the President, the Governors, Chief Ministers and foreign representatives. We even see that it manages all the work (official) associated with the Prime Minister. This office is also concerned with party matters, personal correspondences & complaints which come from the public to the Prime Minister etc. We can see that the jurisdiction of the secretariat (PMO) covers all those subjects & activities which are not categorically allotted to any individual ministry/department. The main task of the secretariat is to give assistance to the Prime Minister in transmitting the responsibility as the head of the government. The principal functions of the Prime Minister's Office may be summarized as dealing with whatever is mentioned under the Rules of Business; helping the Prime Minister in discharging his overall responsibility as the chief executive, as the chairman of the planning commission; to maintain the public relation aspect of the Prime Minister's Office; in operating the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF) & National Defence Fund (NDF); and to handle the crisis situation relating to public issues of national importance & urgency. However, this cannot be considered as entire spectrum of functions performed by the Prime Minister's Office. Apart from the above mentioned functions several other works are handled by it like, answering all those questions which cannot be answered by any particular ministry. It manages all the communication matters of the Prime Minister, and its work stretches to the extent of drafting the important speeches and declaration of the Prime Minister. In the contemporary times, it has been observed that the Prime Minister's Office has virtually become the 'Think Tank' for the Prime Minister. The viewpoint behind its establishment can be considered to leave the Prime Minister with sufficient time to look into major policy decision making.<sup>8</sup>

It is Nehru who brought the Prime Minister's Secretariat into existence, though his idea to establish a high powered secretariat along with cabinet secretariat was not supported by either his colleagues or the senior civil servants. Thus, Nehru did not try to establish separate

secretariat for the Prime Minister during his tenure from 1947 until his death in May 1964. He maintained a small secretarial staff known as Prime Minister's personal office which could not acquire extra-constitutional authority due to Nehru. In the words of Mathai, his Personal Assistant, the staff remained "Mechanics" or "Gatherers" and "Conveyors" of the information only. However, not being allowed to establish a powerful secretariat, Nehru carried a big part of his work through the foreign office which he headed. As a result this ministry attained an out of proportion importance & status.<sup>9</sup>

Initially, when India got Independence Nehru had appointed H V.R Iyengar (ICS) as Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister. He handled two posts together one of the cabinet secretary & the other Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister. This was deliberately done as a part of a policy which becomes clear from the letter of Viceroy Lord Wavell, which states that Nehru's Private Secretariat to be integrated with the Cabinet Secretariat as it will be easier for Nehru to function at the same time he may be stopped from misusing power. Amidst all confusion, the post of Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister was reduced to the post of Joint Secretary, thus reducing the status of the Principal Private Secretary which was done to let everyone know that he (Nehru) did not want to use the office in an autocratic manner. Thus, the importance of Cabinet Secretariat remained as it is. After assuming the office of Prime Minister, Nehru set the trend of Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister attending all cabinet meetings which contradict Nehru's action of reducing the status of Principal Private Secretary. Since then this has become a tradition which has not been questioned till today.<sup>10</sup>

During Shastri's period, we see the establishment of an independent secretariat headed by the Principal Private Secretary along with three joint secretaries and since then the size & importance of the Prime Minister's Secretariat has been increasing. The reason behind its creation can be several one may be as he was not very familiar with issues which enabled him to attend to the responsibilities and thus, he had to have an alternate system of effective functioning. From here begins the process of growing in importance the office of the Prime Minister's Secretariat. In the view of M. O. Mathai, Nehru's personal assistant, it was under Shastri and Indira Gandhi that the Prime Minister's Secretariat underwent a metamorphosis. During Shastri's tenure the Prime Minister's Secretariat was headed by the Principal Secretary L. K Jha, under whom the office gained unprecedented power.

The Prime Minister's Office as we know today attained colossal dimension since the early 70's when Indira Gandhi assumed power which resulted in reducing the importance of the Cabinet Secretariat. Ideally, the Cabinet Secretary in the cabinet system of government

holds the most important position among the civil servants in the country. He is a link between the political & permanent functionaries of the government, but the status of his office was reduced as the Prime Minister's Office gained more prominence.<sup>11</sup>

In 1977 Moraji Desai assumed the office for a short term. He tried to undo the excesses of the emergency during Mrs. Gandhi's period. The first step taken was to downgrade the status by changing the nomenclature 'Secretariat' to 'Office'. Thus, the Prime Minister's Secretariat was redesignated as Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

The role of the Prime Minister's Office becomes almost inevitable as in a parliamentary democracy the Prime Minister is central to the functioning of the government. Thus, the Prime Minister's Office depends mostly on the individual style of the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister's Office is essentially an extension of the political role of the Prime Minister and it very much depends on how a Prime Minister prefers his role to be performed.

Under Rajiv Gandhi, the office expanded both in terms of quantity & quality thus bringing back the role of extra-constitutional authorities.<sup>12</sup> V. P. Singh tried to streamline the functioning of the Prime Minister's Office. He abolished several posts in the Prime Minister's Office, reducing the size of the office. Chandrashekhar's tenure was too short to make any impact in the working of the Prime Minister's Office. The office once again began to assume power & importance under Narashimha Rao. The Prime Minister's Office seems to be often interfering with the normal government machinery. The most striking example of this was when the Foreign Investment & Promotion Board was kept directly under Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister. In 1998, with Atal Behari Vajpayee heading coalition government, yet the office acquired powerful stature. Like every Prime Minister, Vajpayee also expressed his trust & confidence in his Principal Secretary. For the first time during Vajpayee's tenure, the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister even held the post of National Security Advisor (N.S.A.). He was even sent abroad as the personal envoy of the Prime Minister without any prior consultation with the Foreign Minister. Any file relating to Defence Ministry would reach the Prime Minister only after it has been cleared by N.S.A. It has been observed that not only Defence Ministry but even Home Ministry was at times, over shadowed by Principal Secretary, Brajesh Mishra. It has been widely accepted that the survival of any Principal Secretary depends only on Prime Minister's desire to retain him.<sup>13</sup>

As every office has the structural set-up, so do the Prime Minister's Office. But, one does not come across it either in the Constitution or anywhere else. The structure has evolved over the years based on the prerogative of the Prime Minister. Initially, it was influenced to an extent by the British practices. During Nehru's tenure it was not allowed to grow into a powerful

organization and therefore, we do not find any structure as such. Over the years, in the post Independence years, we see that the structure has gradually taken shape depending on the needs of the Prime Minister in order to suit the changing time & situation. The Prime Minister's Office which was headed by Secretary to the Prime Minister is now designated as the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister.

The Principal Secretary is at the apex of the pyramid in the Prime Minister's Office. There is no essential qualification laid down for Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister. The only essential qualification needed for the post is the trust of the Prime Minister. Here it would be worth mentioning that till now this post has been occupied only by civil servants either working or retired. Even though there are no fixed duties laid down for the Principal Secretary, every thing depends on what the Prime Minister wants. His area of functioning has not been limited. It can be both political as well as administrative. He handles every government file in the office and looks after all those ministries affairs that the Prime Minister may ask him for. Sometimes, he is even given the responsibility of preparing answers to questions asked in the parliament for the Prime Minister, which could not be answered by any particular ministry. This further makes it clear that even after so many criticisms Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister survives because he acts on behalf of the Prime Minister and at the same time as directed by the Prime Minister. Except principal secretary, rest of the posts like that of additional secretary, joint secretary, director, have been brought into existence according to the needs of the Government. It is even observed that during the tenure of every Prime Minister some new posts were created such as the post of Press Secretary in 1965 was created during Lal Bahadur Shastri's tenure and in 1968 Social Secretary post was created during Mrs. Gandhi's tenure.<sup>14</sup>

The subject matter of the files decides whether it will be submitted to the Prime Minister or not. Only important issues relating to policy matters which the concerned ministers feel should be submitted to the Prime Minister for orders or infurmarion are received in the Prime Minister's Office. The Prime Minister has traditionally been the Minister-In-Charge of the Department of Space, Atomic Energy and the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions. The Prime Minister is also the Chairman of the Planning Commission thus, the relevant files are furwarded to the Prime Minister's Office for his comments & clearance. Some matters which the Prime Minister looks into personally are issues concerning defence matter, decision relating to cabinet secretariat, policy matters concerning the administration of the civil services & the administrative reforms, appointments of State Administrative Tribunals, & the Central Administrative Tribunals UPSC, Election Commission, etc.. A.N.Verma, the principal secretary to the former Prime Minister Narashimha Roo, in an interview told that various files

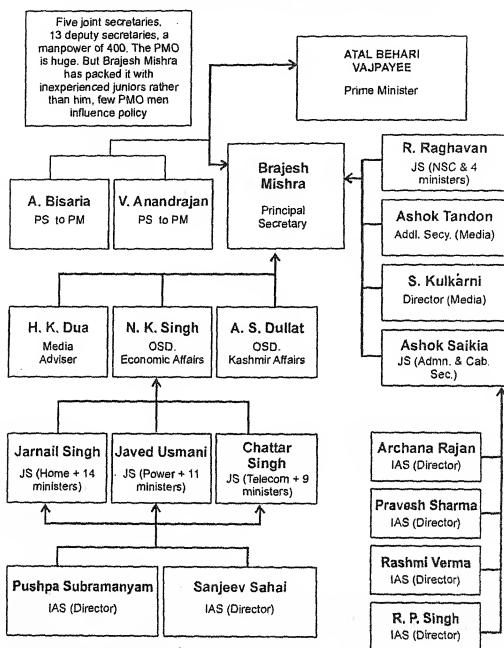
that reached the Prime Minister's Office were looked after by some officers in the Prime Minister's Office because the Prime Minister could not go through all the files on his own. All the facts relating to the ministries are available in the Prime Minister's Office which provides the Prime Minister with much information.

The Prime Minister's Office has no inherent power. It reflects the thinking of the Prime Minister like it was pro-active during Indira Gandhi's tenure, it became powerful under Narasimha Rao government & during Vajpayee's tenure the office came under pressure to shed power but it did not happen.

Nehru's long tenure makes it clear that any Prime Minister requires a strong, well-staffed office to help him discharge his duties. Prime Minister's Office total staff strength in 1949 was six in number as per one source and according to another was 116. In 1958-59, it consisted of 129 persons including all the categories. In 1961-62 it reduced to 101. Nehru had a multiple staff such as a personal secretariat which was headed by a Principal Private Secretary, a secretary general & a private secretary. On the request of the Prime Minister, Mathai was designated as the Special Assistant to the Prime Minister in Prime Minister's Secretariat. Every file or paper used to reach Prime Minister after being scanned by Mathai. When Shastri came to power he originally intended to head his staff by two secretaries namely L. K. Jha, a former Finance Secretary for looking after Economic affairs and L. P. Singh, an I.C.S. for General Administration. During his tenure we see a phenomenal rise in the staff strength which went up to 235 in number.

Till Vajpayee's government, we do not come across any formal structure of the Prime Minister's Office. But his government reveals that each and every appointment made in the office is well calculated and filled with reliable officials on whom the Prime Minister has full confidence. His tenure reveals that there has been a proper structure existing and accordingly the work is distributed. Every joint secretary is allotted number of ministries/departments under them along with the concerned States and they are assisted by the directors and the Officer on Special Duty under them. The office is hesitant about revealing its own functioning which further makes it clear about the confidentiality regarding the functioning of this office. The following chart reveals that almost all the ministries were looked after by the officials of the Prime Minister's Office during Vajpayee's time at the Secretary level which automatically brings all of them under the scrutiny and supervision of the Prime Minister's Office.<sup>15</sup>

### Structure of the Prime Minister's Office



Source : *India Today*, April 2, 2001, p.24

If we analyze right from Independence, we find a steady increase in the strength of the staff although Morarji Desai cut down the size of the Prime Minister's Office yet the total number of posts rose from 194 in 1977 to 203 in 1979. This shows that within the gap of two years during Morarji Desai's tenure also, there was increase in the number of staff. I.K. Gujral who did not remain in power for long yet maintained 202 staffs and the Vajpayee government had a huge manpower of total 400 staffs in the Prime Minister's Office. Even though there is no formal structure of the Prime Minister's Office, we find that every government has been carrying out with certain structure and creating new posts as per the demand of the time or according to the requirement of the functioning. In Vajpayee's Government, one finds a new development that is the post of National Security Advisor has been combined with the Principal Secretary. Similarly, we find the Intelligence agencies also functioning closely in contact with the Prime Minister's Office.

Apart from a regular structure that exists right from Nehru's period, with increase and decrease in the strength of the staff, we find the Prime Minister's Office is connected with other offices. The Prime Minister's Office handles the public grievances where it receives a large number of petitions which includes request for financial and medical aid, job placement, messages for various functions, suggestions for improving governance, etc. These petitions are properly sorted out in the Prime Minister's Office Office and are forwarded to the concerned ministry/departments for necessary action. The public wing in the Prime Minister's Office is placed in the charge of an officer on special duty and the records are maintained on computer. This step relating to public grievances were taken by Vajpayee government whereas in Nehru's time the same use to be collected at Prime Minister's house and many were personally handled by him.

According to the recommendation of the Administrative Reform Commission which was set up in 1964, there should not be any portfolio/ministry in charge of the Prime Minister and if he is holding one, it should not be stressing him out so that he can utilize his time in other important work. However, in actual practice the recommendation was not carried out. The Prime Minister has always kept some important ministries under him. The role of the Prime Minister's Office multiples automatically when the Prime Minister's portfolios increases like holding the Department of Atomic Energy has become a tradition of the Indian Prime Minister since the days of Nehru. At times, a sort of friction is observed between the ministries and the Prime Minister's Office, for example the Prime Minister's Office blanned the Tarapur fuel dispute with United States to the Ministry of External Affairs and the Department of Atomic Energy.

The Prime Minister's Office has been powerful during the Emergency period for which it was criticized for going far beyond its functioning. During Mrs. Gandhi's tenure the Department of Revenue Intelligence and the Department of Enforcement (before emergence both were in the Ministry of Finance) were brought under the control of the Prime Minister's Office. After she was out of power, all departments were returned to their respective ministries. We even find the Intelligence agencies like the Intelligence Bureau (B), the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Criminal Investigation Department (Special Branch) with the IB and a special cell created for the purposes of external intelligence known as Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) which was separated from its parent organization (Home Ministry) was placed under the Cabinet Secretariat. This gave extensive benefit to the Prime Minister during the period of Internal Emergency and this made the Prime Minister's Office and through it the Prime Minister an unquestioned supreme ruler in India. The concentration of power in the hands of Prime Minister and her secretariat undermined the normal functioning of the government and its machinery.

The Prime Minister's Office also maintains the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF) and the National Defence Fund (NDF). This was created to provide immediate relief

to the people in distress and is directly operated from the Prime Minister's Office. These funds are utilized for the immediate relief to the families of those suffered in natural calamities like flood, cyclones, etc. And even to the needy people for medical treatments such as like heart surgery, kidney transplantation, etc. According to an official of the Prime Minister's Office, the fund section is separately managed by the officers headed by the joint secretary. Similarly, the NDF is also maintained by the Prime Minister's Office and its fund is used primarily for the relief & rehabilitation of the widows and the orphans of army personnel who are killed or imprisoned during the war. Thus, there are several departments attached to the Prime Minister's Office makes it impossible for the Prime Minister to look into everything and therefore, an office apart from the normal structure, prevailing in the system becomes necessary.<sup>16</sup>

As it is already discussed, during Nehru's time the Prime Minister's Office was an insignificant part of the system and it did not overshadow the cabinet secretariat. Nehru was well versed with the situation of the country thus, he hardly required any office to guide him. Although he did not create a strong secretariat yet he continued to do work through it. After Nehru's death, it is Lal Bahadur Shastri who brought the Prime Minister's Office into actual functioning. He inducted two senior civil servants Dharma Vira and L. K. Jha. L. K. Jha who was appointed as Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister demanded to change his designation as the 'Secretary to the Prime Minister' to which Shastri agreed without any reason. The office became the centre of power under L. K. Jha. He influenced several areas in the government functioning and used to be part of all committees at the Secretary level in the Government of India. There were instructions given to ministry to keep the Prime Minister's Office informed about all the matters. In the words of L. K. Jha, "I had to advise him in most matters, including the war with Pakistan, the Non Alignment Summit, Britain, Canada. And as Shastriji was not in good health, people would come and ask me rather than him. Sometimes, for the UN Security Council meeting, our man there would ring me up at 2 a.m. rather than disturb Shastriji. I would either give a response if I know the Prime Minister's mind or say I would get back to the caller after speaking to the Prime Minister. But acutally, my role was important largely because of Shastriji's weak physical condition. So at many times I had to present myself. And also, I was on so many committees." His position can be understood further by his statement : "So when I was not speaking on Shastriji's behalf or giving the Prime Minister position, I was thinking of ruling at a perosnal level." This position, a secretary can acquire only in the situation when the highest office of the country is headed by a weak Prime Minister.<sup>17</sup>

During Indira Gandhi's tenure, the Prime Minister's Office came to limelight due to Principal Secretaries P. N. Haksar and P.C. Alexander. Under Indira Gandhi the Prime Minister's Office became very powerful. The civil servants who were personally loyal to her assumed

greater influence within the office. In 1969-70, we come across the demand of a political loyalty from the bureaucrats, commitments from the Civil Servants were demanded and the argument put forth was that the neutral administrative machinery is the hindrance and not a help, and it is hardly relevant to Indian conditions. Rajiv Gandhi also continued on the same line. The partisan promotions and transfers of senior bureaucrats were the regular phenomena.

The BJP led coalition government brought Prime Minister's Office into prominence. The importance given to the office of the Prime Minister becomes all the more clear when Brajesh Mishra was appointed on the same day as the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister. When BJP led government took charge of the office, Prime Minister Vajpayee made a statement when demands were made to remove Mishra from the position of Principal Secretary that instead of asking Brajesh Mishra to quit, he (Vajpayee) "might himself quit". Even BJP allies Shiv Sena and RSS wanted him to be replaced although there were no charges against him. But, they felt that he had become real power centre and Prime Minister himself had begun to depend on his Principal Secretary. The working of this office shows that no Prime Minister took the initiative to define the role of Prime Minister's Office.<sup>18</sup> One prominent reason to it could be that they wanted to use it according to their own convenience. Another could be that defining the role would mean putting restraint on oneself. What we could assess is that it is only in theory that Prime Minister's Office is to assist the Prime Minister whereas in reality, it has come to work with Prime Minister and on behalf of the Prime Minister. What we can conclude from the overall discussion is that the bureaucracy thrives under cloak of Prime Minister. It is the Prime Minister on whose wish the Principal Secretary acquires important position in the political system and that the Prime Minister's Office is an essential part of the government.

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## BOOK REVIEW

**Measure For Measure: Lynching Deaths In West Bengal A Sociological Study by  
Samit Kar, K.P.Bagchi & Company, Kolkata, 2006, pp. 247, Price Rs. 400.**

Anything, any process or belief that somewhere detaches itself from the past or its contemporaries is termed as modern, which may be either progressive or regressive, for not all modernization is development. Modernization, of course, may be instrumental in development; therefore, it is merely one of the means through which the goal of development may be achieved. Modernization, however, comes with its own share of demerits. It promises the society with a better, smooth, comfortable, less burdening and happier life, but the picture is not all that rosy. For some of the facets of modernization are more often than not at loggerheads with each other, for example, education and high-wage employment, guiding tenets of global governance and societal formations and the like; that is brotherhood, equality and peace get botched. And these consequential aspects of modernization process strike a blow on the society in terms of mounting social unrest and disharmony at the global, national and regional levels the world over. It is this that gets reflected in the outbreak of lynching deaths in West Bengal as they unabatedly continue since three decades now, the issue that has been explicitly dealt with from a sociological perspective in this book while analyzing the social impact of modernization detailing out the reasons behind unabated occurrence of lynching deaths in the state. The book is a published portrayal of the social survey carried out by the author, Mr. Samit Kar, on lynching deaths in West Bengal by availing UGC assistance. The present study is based on fieldwork findings in the two districts of the state: South 24 Parganas and North Dinajpur; and has been compiled into seven chapters preceded by an introduction, and at the end an exhaustive series of various tables has been appended divided into six parts.

The 'Introduction' to the book giving a summarized view of the study discusses the universal phenomenon of disturbing spread of the culture of violence and vandalism. It cites some important international experiences of social violence, and puts forward the reality of growing dissension in the Indian society where communalism runs as an ideology, casting a special focus on the case of West Bengal. Further gives various reasons behind the alarming rate of lynching in rural areas of West Bengal, and also suggests a few plans of action that the Government may initiate to combat lynching through active participation of panchayats. Also discusses social and psychological theories explaining the reasons behind unparalleled lynching cases in the countryside of West Bengal.

The first chapter provides 'Background of the Study' in which the author deliberates over what lynching is, traces its origin, and delineates its history rooted in American society. A general account of lynching deaths has been provided as also some exclusive newspaper reports on lynching deaths in West Bengal in order to provide the readers an insight into the

nature of such instances in the state.

The second chapter brings to the readers the 'Theoretical Background' of lynching to show how and why human behaviour is so motivated as to inflict sufferings on others with such brutality. In this chapter the author informs that socio-psychologists view lynching as a form of aggressive behaviour. In order to understand the underlying causes of lynching it is imperative to first understand the human behaviour and its various dimensions, like need, motivation, frustration, aggression, etc. Both sociological and psychological theories of human aggression have been discussed which in turn provide a theoretical explanation for lynching.

The third chapter talks about the 'Social History of West Bengal' and the state's performance in various fields. In this course, the author discusses the various stages of the social history of India in terms of de-industrialization and peasant movements, in much detail. He wades through history to give an account of the various social, political and economic factors that hampered the domestic industry in the country and impaired the entire socio-economic set-up putting the country's economy on back-foot. West Bengal was extensively affected as it offered a fertile ground for all these events for many a reason. Discusses the significance of peasant movements, and the Congress-peasants interface, organization of Kisan Sabhas in Bengal. Also discusses the land reforms initiated by the Government of India to do away with feudal polity, and also their implementation and performance in West Bengal. In addition, throws light on frustration looming large over helpless and suppressed rural-agrarian society.

The fourth chapter 'Caste System in West Bengal' acquaints its readers with the social structure in West Bengal that is largely dependent on the system of caste, with castes being divided into two main groups ?? Brahmins and Shudras. It has come to fore that the Union Government's policy of positive discrimination has been inherently paradoxical as the seeds of a new form of casteism hidden in it have germinated over the substratum of government patronage, thus enabling many to derive mileage of various forms. Caste, both in its latent and manifest forms, remains a potent force in determination of rural power dynamics in West Bengal, alongwith several other variables.

The fifth chapter depicts the exercise undertaken by the author for 'Searching the Reasons of Assertive Legacy' of lynching deaths in the state, and offers a perusal on the social fabric of rural West Bengal. This chapter has been divided into six sections. Section I deals with the experience of Third World nations in regard to globalization and the related processes. Section II discusses the socio-historical perspective of the rural social fabric of the state. Section III puts forward West Bengal's achievement in offering an alternative approach to development reliant on people's participation. Sections IV and V provide the methodology of the present study and its findings. The last section highlights the active involvement of the rural local bodies in West Bengal in context of LPG wave (Liberalization-Privatization-Globalization), depicting the strengthening panchayats and empowering rural

masses in the state.

The sixth chapter presents the 'Findings of the Study' carried out by the present researcher in the districts of South 24 Parganas and North Dinajpur as the quantum of lynching deaths occurring here is quite large. Three case studies have been presented to show how lynching is being used by masses as a weapon against crime in the wake of indifferent and weakening police system in the state, further reducing the law and order machinery to a mockery. The analysis of the fieldwork findings runs through seven sections: demographic profile, law and order situation, respondents' faith in police and administration, reasons behind lynching, nature of the recent incidents of lynching, solution to the problem of lynching, and role of media. It has come to light that lynching can be abated by educating the masses against it and simultaneously reforming the law and order system to make it more efficient through stringent laws and expeditious judicial system. Media's role where on one hand can be very fruitful in creating public awareness to prevent lynching; it also somewhere is responsible for deviating the masses by creating negative public attitude towards police and administration.

The last chapter draws 'Conclusion' from the study suggesting that lynching deaths in West Bengal are the result of ventilation of frustration by teeming millions driven by the spirit of pro-people collective action. The dynamic decentralized process running at the behest of common villagers and the breaking law and order machinery have been the root cause behind unleashing of mob-violence in the form of lynching. Continued cases of lynching pose a threat to the society as it sets a perception of social acceptability towards such ghastly and barbaric acts. The present researcher has also tried to draw a comparison between lynching in West Bengal and that in America, and found that lynching in America was motivated mainly by racist ideology, but there is no communal aspect of the lynching issue in West Bengal.

There are six Appendices with regard to: i)Crime and lynching in different districts of West Bengal (1996-2001), ii)Area profiles of the study area, iii)Respondents, iv)Lynching cases in West Bengal, v)Crime statistics of different states of India, vi)District-wise data on lynching deaths in West Bengal (2001-2005). At the end of the book a very exhaustive Bibliography has been supplied by the researcher.

The author nowhere tries to justify these acts of criminality either overtly or covertly. He very assertively states that 'rural vigilantism' in no way merits such shameful acts which are a vociferous proof of a stinking society. It is a very coherent, well woven and neatly narrated study, but required a slightly more careful proof reading exercise. Nevertheless exhibits an input of great effort on the part of the researcher, and is a very remarkable eye-opener to the issue studied thereby.

*Aditi Tyagi*

**BOOK REVIEW**

**Nalin Kumar Mohapatra, Political Culture and Democratic Development in Central Asia, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Kolkata, and Bookwell, New Delhi, 2006, Rs.750/- (ISBN 81-89640-17-8).**

The notion of political culture has gained wide popularity in the decades of 1950s and 1960s in the discipline of Political Science. Political culture gives an answer to how can a country manages democracy and ensures its political stability despite numerous hindrances? Some times the study of political culture provides answer to question - why one system fails and another survives despite their acquisition of independence at similar time? Main attribute of such development may be due to their adoption of divergent cultural perspectives. The present book under review also deals with some of these issues and gives a lucid explanation of notion of political culture and democratic development in the context of Central Asia.

This book has six chapters followed by conclusion and a postscript. First chapter deals with a theoretical presentation of the twin concept of democracy and political culture and their suitability to the newly independent Central Asian Republics (CARs). Author analyses democracy as a broader socio-cultural phenomenon and is of the view that the existing sociocultural and economic conditions provide the necessary thrust to institutional aspect of democracy. While in the narrow term it is limited only to the institutional aspect. Author visualizes further that any mismatch between these twin aspects are likely to generate instability in the state. Here task of the political elite becomes significant as to balance both these forces so that political stability can be maintained. Here comes the importance of the notion of political culture. In this post-Soviet era the states of Central Asia are facing the problems of consolidation of the democratization process and limiting the damaging consequences of democratic deficit and trust deficit among political elites and masses in these states. Author also demonstrates how culture with a political leaning can play an important role in shaping the political dynamics of a country ? While finding many similarities between newly independent states of Asia and Africa as well as the post-Soviet Central Asian states Mohapatra is quite right when he observes that, "One has to look into the cultural aspects before embarking upon democratization process. Simply universalizing the norms and values of democracy cannot help much." (p.23),

In the light of above theoretical perspective author examines the process of political developments in CARs both during historical and contemporary periods in the next chapter. Historically speaking, geographical location and cross-cultural inter-regional connections provides a fertile soil for growth of paternalistic political culture in the Central Asia. Flourishing of nomadic, semi-nomadic and sedentary civilizations have also influenced the developments in Central Asia in the past. Despite ruled by divergent groups, this region provides an organic notion of state emerged viewed the author. Obedience to elderly ruling authority and respect for one's own clan group are some of the other features of political culture prevalent in Central Asia. These customary rules and regulations are transmitted from generation to

generation and provided continuity to the political processes in the contemporary Central Asia. Nature of Tsarist administrative system also has its influence in these states. The political developments of Central Asia after the formation of U.S.S.R as well as the socio-economic development that took place during that period have also been evaluated. Thus, the Tsarist annexation of Central Asia and the formation of Soviet Union have worked as most significant factors in shaping the political culture of contemporary Central Asia.

In the third chapter author dwells at length on the role of Glasnost (openness) and Perestroika (restructuring) in shaping the political process of these states. He is of the view that these concepts not only worked as mechanisms to reform the erstwhile Soviet political system, but also facilitated the growth of "dialectic political culture" in this region. This he attributes to the sociocultural development that took place in the region. Emergence of informal political groups, liberalized political environment as well as new ways of managing political system led to the faulty management of political system that created chaos in the system. This probably worked as one of the important factor responsible for disintegration of former Soviet Union.

Fourth chapter evaluated the factor and forces facilitating the process of democratization in this region. After providing a comprehensive and holistic picture of the democratic development in Central Asia the author lists out major achievements accomplished by the political elites since the attainment of independence. Instead of relying on Western models for this purpose author lists out various indigenous models which can be used for ensuring smoother democratisation process. Here emphasis has been given on the politics of constitutional amendment, electoral politics and role of political parties in sustaining democratisation process of these states. An indepth analysis of how the political elites of Central Asia, using existing transitional socioeconomic crisis as a pretext to prolong their rule, have also been made. Author has rightly remarked that, "Democracy is not all about holding regular election to the high offices and establishing institutional structure of governance but it also implies fulfilling the needs and aspirations of the masses as well as giving them an opportunity to have a say in the governance of the state." (p.168)

Informal political process and social structure play an important role in shaping the democratisation process. Central Asia being a traditional society has been more influenced by such setup. Informal political process like clan, mahalla and civil society are playing significant role to shape the transient political culture as well as political processes in these states. These are some of the issues addressed in the fifth chapter of this study. Author has rightly observed that these factors are not only "shaping the political process of the present Central Asian states, [but] are also helping to a great extent in fostering the creation of new value system largely conditioned by them [informal process]". (p.179) Though it is generally perceived that thriving of personal and clan networks impedes the democratisation process, yet the author has succinctly brought out how these clans play the role of fostering the democratisation process in all the five states of Central Asia? Besides clan role of mahalla structure has also been evaluated and highlighted. These mahalla structures are responsible

to "articulate" and "aggregate" the demand of the masses and communicate the same to the political system. Sometimes they play the role of local judicial authority in resolving local disputes. Civil society though a new phenomenon in Central Asia is also playing an important role despite its numerous limitations. Despite these positive developments one cannot ignore the negative role of corruption as part of informal political process. Thus, it is inevitable that howsoever modern a political system may be the role of traditional and informal political processes cannot be ruled out.

In the last chapter role of ethno-nationalistic and religious fundamentalist groups to pose a challenge to the nascent democratisation process of the Central Asian states has been analyzed. These factors have been examined to understand the capacity of the political system to withstand the stress and strain generated through the mobilization of these two forces. Politics of language, rewriting of history, growth of indigenous administration, the dichotomy of civic vs. ethnic nationalism etc. have also been highlighted for complete understanding of the phenomenon. Negative and positive implications of Islam have also been evaluated. Author viewed that in the post-Soviet period radical Islam is playing negative role in these states. In this context, role-played by Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and Hizb-tahrir-Al-Islami (HTI), in propagating xenophobia throughout Central Asia, comes out very prominently. He is also apprehensive that these tendencies are going to work as major irritant in the states of Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. This can only be overcome with the growth of pluralistic political culture in Central Asia. Findings of the study are recorded in the form of conclusion. The postscript has been added to meet out the gap between the completions of research till the time of its publication.

Thus, the above work is one of the original and seminal studies to examine the political culture and democratic development of Central Asia based on rich bibliography as is evident from the text. Field study conducted by the scholar in Moscow and Almaty for this project has certainly added charm for the student in this area. The study is unique as it has not only evaluated democratization process from institutional perspective, but has presented a holistic analysis of historical, sociological and economic factors in shaping the political culture and democratisation process. Now the question arises - Can the concept of political culture in the 50s and 60s considered as 'ethnocentric' and irrelevant to the study of newly independent states be useful at present? The study is also deficient in not giving equal importance to international developments and milieu. It has also not given due focus on the prevailing process of globalization which at present is major determinant for the growth and successful working of the democratic processes and political culture in these states. However, despite these shortcomings contribution of this study cannot be overlooked. One can certainly say that this book is a valuable addition to the very scant literature available on the theme. It will be of immense help for both academicians and policy makers and would work as good source material on political developments in Central Asia.

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